



AIWF NEWS

Arab International Women's Forum

المنتدى العربي الدولي للمرأة

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London

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

The AIWF Programme for 2009 had an excellent start with our Paris Conference, *From Partnership to Prosperity: Women in the Arab World, France and the International Community*, with AIWF being honoured at the highest level by Madame Lagarde, Minister for the Economy, Industry and Employment, France and partnered by the Greater Paris Investment Agency. This unique opportunity to bridge Arab and French business communities and to promote cross border business growth brought together influential women from the region, including five Arab women Ministers, for this innovative business to business concept.

Following on, one of the successful outcomes of the conference is a newsletter specially produced for AIWF by our valued member, Mrs Brigitte Messali, which incorporates the latest investment and business news from France for all participants in the Paris conference to maintain links for partnership in fostering international trade between the Arab world and the international community.

The next significant event was in July when, on behalf of the Arab International Women's Forum, I signed a landmark agreement, a **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**, with the Arab British Chamber of Commerce, (ABCC) London to form a powerful coalition to jointly promote trade and foster economic development within the UK and the Arab world with a special focus on women's entrepreneurship.

Plans for major initiatives are already progressing on our joint efforts to expand the outreach and partnership with key players and stakeholders fulfilling the opportunities provided by the MOU. More details of this agreement can be found on page 2 of this newsletter.

AIWF is hosting a **Seminar on Corporate Governance in Amman**, Jordan on 19 October 2009 with the cooperation of institutional partners, Hawkamah Institute of Corporate Governance, Mudara IOD at the DIFC Dubai, the World Bank and Global Corporate Partner, DLA Piper and with the support of local leading women's organisations, Business and Professional Women, Jordan and the International Women's Forum, Jordan. Participants will include women business leaders, aspiring business owners and entrepreneurs not only from Jordan but also the wider Arab region together with international delegates.

Collaboration with many leading Arab and international organisations is very well established and indeed expanding. Again in 2009 we will be participating in and supporting the **MENA OECD Investment Programme Women Business Leaders Summit** being held on 22 November in Marrakesh, Morocco and I am delighted to have been invited, as Chairman of AIWF, to become a member of the MENA-OECD Business Council which will be launched at that meeting in Marrakesh. The Business Council seeks to strengthen public-private dialogue on business climate reform priorities and to make formal recommendations to policy makers on maximising the impact and effectiveness of reform policies. It sponsors high impact projects to foster innovation, entrepreneurship and competitiveness in the MENA region and fosters exchange and learning between business leaders within the region itself; the Council also promotes business engagement in regional and country-based initiatives on leveraging technology for business, establishing competitive clusters and advocating responsible business conduct.

At the **UNCTAD /EMPRETEC Women in Business Award 2010** I shall be participating as a member of the Award Panel and I shall also be addressing the gathering on the occasion of this event which will be held in April 2010 in Doha, Qatar.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

AIWF SEMINAR

Directorship, Development and Diversity: Challenges for Women in Governance

Presented by AIWF and Mudara (IOD)
in partnership with Hawkamah
in cooperation with and hosted by
BPW-Amman & IWF, Jordan Chapter
Supported by DLA Piper & The World Bank

at the Kempinski Hotel,
Amman, Jordan
on Monday, 19 October 2009

For more information contact the AIWF office
email info@aiwfonline.com www.aiwfonline.com

For the second consecutive year, AIWF is engaged in being a supporting partner for **The Economist**, The World in 2010 which this year on 23 November will hold a conference on Building a New World Order in Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates.

AIWF is providing full cooperation with the **Financial Times** in its third acclaimed Special Report on Leading Arab Business Women which will be launched in December; the publication of this Report is being especially aligned with a major AIWF event in London in December 2009, (to be announced shortly).

AIWF is participating in the 90th Anniversary celebrations of the **International Chamber of Commerce**. As Chairman of AIWF I have been invited to make a contribution under the title **'Trade and Women'** which will appear in the special anniversary book being published to celebrate the mission of ICC as a *'merchant of peace through world trade'* in December in New Delhi.

AIWF is aware of the need to continually move ahead with its strategies and advocacy and realises that this progression must be demonstrated by its external image. After over 8 years of growing the organisation, it is an appropriate time to refresh our image and therefore I am delighted to announce that AIWF will be launching a **New Website** by the end of 2009 with the new corporate style and facilities meeting the Member's needs. This project is being carried out by two valued supporters of AIWF – Omnia (Dubai) and Fraser Communications (California, USA).

I would like to take this opportunity to express our continuing appreciation of the tremendous support that we receive from all our Global Partners, PepsiCo, Shell, Manpower Inc, DLA Piper, General Motors, PricewaterhouseCoopers, and Merrill Lynch. This year, our relationship has developed with the introduction of a Partner's Task Force that followed two meetings with our distinguished Annual Global Partners in Dubai in January and May which has taken our cooperation to a new level and gave me the opportunity to reiterate our appreciation for their cooperation and involvement with AIWF in all our activities.

Looking ahead, the AIWF programme continues to support its overall mission of *Building Bridges, Building Business*, remaining totally engaged with our partners and members to push ahead the agenda for business growth and development. We look forward to your continued support and participation.

Haifa AlKoylani

Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani
Chairman, Arab International Women's Forum

AIWF SIGNS LANDMARK AGREEMENT WITH THE ARAB BRITISH CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



Dr Afnan Al Shuaiby, Secretary General & CEO, Arab British Chamber of Commerce and Mrs Haifa Al Kaylani, Chairman, AIWF signing the Memorandum of Understanding

AIWF is delighted to confirm that a landmark agreement, a Memorandum of Understanding, (MOU) was signed on Wednesday, 1st July 2009 between the Arab British Chamber of Commerce (ABCC) and the Arab International Women’s Forum (AIWF) at a reception hosted by the Chamber at 43 Upper Grosvenor Street, London in the presence of a prestigious company of guests from government, diplomatic, business and professional circles joining with members and partners of both organisations.

The signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding, **Dr Afnan Al Shuaiby**, Secretary General and Chief Executive Officer of the Arab British Chamber of Commerce, and **Mrs Haifa Al Kaylani**, Chairman of the Arab International Women’s Forum, both emphasised their commitment to the spirit and intent of the document to create a powerful coalition to jointly promote trade and enhance business ties between Arab women and their British and international counterparts and to foster economic growth within the United Kingdom, the Arab world’s largest trading partner, and the 22 states of the Arab League.

Dr Afnan Al Shuaiby expressed her admiration for the substantive and growing programme of activities undertaken by the AIWF under its founder and chairman Mrs Haifa Al Kaylani and stated that the agreement heralds a new stage in the relations between the two organisations. She went on to say, *“Arab women are increasingly making their presence felt in the boardroom, as investors and as decision makers in a wide range of areas of the economy and in public life but a lot remains to be done before the full potential of women can be realised”*.

Under the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding, the ABCC and AIWF will join in planning a series of events and activities, within the UK and across the Arab region, that will nurture and build connections and partnerships, strengthening the trading capacity of their members. The ABCC – AIWF Programme will be supported by information and training seminars or meetings on key issues to help enhance business and financial expertise and highlight the conditions and opportunities for all types of trading with focus on trade missions.

Mrs Haifa Al Kaylani warmly thanked the ABCC for the invitation received to co-sign the Memorandum of Understanding on behalf of AIWF and paid tribute to the work of the Chamber, spanning over 30 years, in building and strengthening relations between the UK and the Arab world thereby encouraging and promoting Arab-British trade and economic cooperation.

To quote Mrs Al Kaylani, *“I would also like to take this opportunity to commend Dr Afnan Al Shuaiby, the first woman in the history of the Chamber to be elected as Secretary General and CEO, on her appointment and for her work and to say, on behalf of my Board, how*

privileged we are to enter into this Memorandum of Understanding under her leadership of the Chamber and to have her also as a valued Trustee and Board Member of AIWF.”

She stated that the Chamber, established under the banner of ‘Friendship through Trade’, shares many objectives with AIWF whose mission, since it was founded in 2001, has been ‘Building Bridges, Building Business’, thereby seeking to bring together Arab women business leaders and entrepreneurs with their counterparts in the United Kingdom and the international community to strengthen their existing networks and to widen their sphere of collaboration.

The Key Points for the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding are:

- The MOU is a landmark agreement between two prominent organisations working towards prosperity and stability in the Arab region.
- The MOU will provide a powerful coalition to jointly promote trade and intercultural exchange within the UK and the Arab world with a special emphasis on fostering women’s entrepreneurship.
- The two organisations have parallel missions: ABCC has a banner of “Friendship through Trade”, AIWF ‘s guiding principle is “Building Bridges, Building Business” both with a commitment to innovation and public – private collaboration.
- Both organisations work with governments and civil society enhancing communication and understanding, showcasing the role of Arab business leaders and entrepreneurs to foster economic growth within the UK, (Arab world’s largest trading partner) and the 22 Arab states.
- The MOU will give added impetus to the support of women’s role in business, political and social leadership where women’s integrity is needed more than ever to aid the global economic recovery.
- The new partnership will hold jointly branded events covering key topical issues relating to women’s roles and their potential to succeed in the world economy.
- The two organisations will jointly develop a new initiative to create greater awareness and recognition of women’s success and prospects in the Arab world.
- Each organisation will benefit by expanding their outreach and partnership with key players and stakeholders globally through their cooperation in their business connectivity, advocacy and economic and social development.



HH Sheikhha Hanadi Bin Khalid Al Thani, Guest Speaker

The Guest Speaker at this event was the prominent Arab woman business leader, **HH Sheikha Hanadi Nasser Bin Khalid Al Thani**, Founder & Chairperson, Amwal, a leading Investment Banking, Asset Management and Wealth Management company from Qatar. In her remarks, Sheikha Hanadi said how pleased she was to witness this signing between two organisations keen to foster business exchange and trade between Arab women and their international counterparts and she was very proud to be a Board Member of the Arab International Women's Forum, and of the recognition that their work and development had received through this agreement."

While there has been a considerable measure of collaboration between the two organisations, the recognition of a formal partnership will allow the ABCC and AIWF to strengthen the capacity of both organisations in their mission to showcase the potential of Arab women, to promote cross-cultural diversity and to create greater public awareness of women's success and prospects in the Arab world with a strong emphasis on trade.

Dr Al Shuaiby and Mrs Al Kaylani both have great pleasure in the establishment of this valuable link and very much look forward to the future cooperation of the two organisations on their joint objective to promote trade and new business partnerships. In concluding, Mrs Al Kaylani said, "...at a time when economies around the globe are struggling to emerge from the current recession, there are many strong women - led businesses that can make a valuable contribution to economic recovery. Indeed not only in business, but also in political and social leadership women's integrity is needed more than ever. My Board and I very much look forward to our successful future cooperation."

Sylvia Perry
AIWF Board Member

HE Dr. Abdullah Dardari, Syrian Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, chaired the Commission of the Syrian Economic and Political group of 150 participants to the Arab-German Economic Forum. He noted the importance of Syria as a link between Europe and Asia, and the importance of access to Iraq through Syria, adding that his country is investing heavily in infrastructure and technology in the German and Arab capitals. He gave an overview of the role of the Syrian economic reform over recent years to advance towards a market economy. Dr Dardari underlined the importance of establishing strategic partnerships, calling on German investors to come to Syria make their investments there, noting further that Syria will invest 100 billion Euros up to 2015 in infrastructure projects. **HE Mr. Adnan Kassar**, Chairman of the General Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture for Arab Countries has become an important catalyst in expanding German-Arab economic relations. He noted that Arab exports to the EU is 18 per cent of total Arab exports whilst the Arab imports from the EU is 36 per cent of the total Arab imports pointing to the importance of follow-up results of the forum to bolster still further German-Arab economic activity.

Meetings and workshops allow familiarisation with the various aspects of the Arab-German economic cooperation in the fields of infrastructure and petrochemical industries and gas, banking and financial services, investment, technology transfer and information technology, telecommunications and urban construction. Optimal use of energy resources has also been one of the comprehensive sessions of the Forum to discuss economic cooperation between Syria and Germany and to discuss the development of this economic cooperation of trade between Arab countries and Germany under the current economic crisis.

I was delighted as Secretary General and Chief Executive of the Arab British Chamber of Commerce and, on behalf of the AIWF Board, to address the Forum for Arab Women in the Global Economy session. I described the crucial role Arab women are playing in the development of a prosperous economy adding that today many women are now active in a remarkably diverse number of professions, including the armed forces, finance, engineering, the judiciary and the new technology industries. Furthermore, I indicated that entrepreneurial and investment activities are becoming increasingly popular options for Arab women keen to balance their traditional roles in the home and their career aspirations. In the UAE, women make up 60% of the workforce in medical care, education, nursing and pharmacy, and constitute around 40% of the workforce in the banking sector. This evidence stresses how far women have come to make vital contributions to the business world.

Also I highlighted that, although the advances made by women in the move towards a greater role in the professional world is real and significant, more needs to be done for women to be able to realise their full potential. Drawing on research recently released by the UAE banking group The National Investor (TNI), I revealed that women in the GCC currently hold only 1.5% of boardroom seats, although their presence is increasing. I stated that although this figure is small compared to the US (13.6%) and Norway (22%), it is higher than several developed nations such as Japan whose female representation in the boardroom is just 0.4%. I emphasised that more needs to be done to develop the support services available to women in business along with more initiatives to encourage female entrepreneurs. I pointed towards the necessity of making available opportunities for Arab women to team up with investors interested in financing their business projects. Underscoring the role the private sector and global partners could play in initiating such support, I related the benefits offered by the dynamism and creativity of Arab women.

Dr Afnan Al Shuaiby
Secretary-General & CEO, Arab British Chamber of Commerce
AIWF Board Member

AIWF AT THE ARAB – GERMAN ECONOMIC FORUM



Dr Afnan Al Shuaiby addressing the Arab-German Economic Forum

The Arab-German Economic Forum XII, held in Berlin, was attended by a record number of representatives from various sectors of economic and political grounding within the Arab States as well as the Federal Republic of Germany. **Dr. Thomas Bach**, Chairman of the Chamber, described the German-Arab economic relations as encouraging in the light of the global economic crisis. Most notably, German exports during the first quarter of this year grew by 3 per cent whilst on the whole German exports declined by 20.7 per cent during the same period. Dr. Bach noted that many Arab countries are expected to have high GDP growth rates in the year ahead especially given the ambitious development plans, which give German companies the chance to take advantage of opportunities emerging from the increased demand for engineering services, industrial enterprises, construction machinery and other equipment. Thus German-Arab economic relations, cemented in establishing strategic partnerships between German and Arab companies, will be instrumental in overcoming the effects of the global economic crisis in the German economy.

AIWF GLOBAL PARTNERS LUNCH AND MEETING HOSTED BY DLA PIPER



Mrs Haifa Al Kaylani, Chairman AIWF at the DLA Piper Offices in Dubai with Mr David Church, Regional Managing Partner for DLA Piper for Middle East and Mrs Wafa' Tarnowska, Regional Manager for CSR and Arab Initiatives, DLA Piper and members of the DLA Piper Dubai legal team.

For the second time this year, **Mrs Haifa Al Kaylani**, Chairman of AIWF, held a meeting over lunch with AIWF's **Global Partners** hosted by DLA Piper at their offices in Dubai on the 27 May. This followed the earlier meeting held in January and hosted by PepsiCo International, which was attended by **Mrs Rania Rizk**, International Legal Council for PepsiCola International Ltd, **Dr Gavin Graham**, New Business Director, Shell Middle East, **Mr Michael Stevenson**, Mid East Senior Partner, Head of Audit & Advisory Services, PriceWaterhouseCoopers, **Mr David Arkless**, President, Global Corporate & Government Affairs, Manpower, **Mr David Church**, Regional Managing Partner for DLA Piper Middle East, **Mrs Wafa' Tarnowska**, Regional Manager for CSR and Arab Initiatives, DLA Piper, **Ms Saada Hamad**, Communications & PR Manager, GM Africa & Middle East, and **Mr Amir Sadr**, Director Head of Middle East, Global Wealth Management, Merrill Lynch Bank, Dubai Branch.

The May Partners meeting was attended by **Ms Clare Woodcraft**, Director of Communications for Shell International, **Mrs Rania Rizk**, International Legal Council for PepsiCola International Ltd, **Ms Saada Hamad**, Communications & PR Manager, GM Africa & Middle East, **Mr David Church**, Regional Managing Partner for DLA Piper Middle East as well as **Mr Tony Holland**, DLA 's Dubai Managing Partner and **Mrs Wafa' Tarnowska**, Regional Manager for CSR and Arab Initiatives, DLA.

The partners applauded **Mrs Al Kaylani** for the very successful **AIWF Conference in Paris in March** in conjunction with the Greater Paris Investment Agency and discussed plans for future conferences.

Mrs Rania Rizk of Pepsico suggested the creation of a **Task Force** from the Partners present which would include herself, **Wafa' Tarnowska** and **Clare Woodcraft** to plan and discuss how we can better leverage our partnership to support the common goals linking us to AIWF.

At the close of the meeting, **Mrs Al Kaylani** met with senior members of **DLA Piper's** legal team for an informal question and answer session on AIWF's activities and plans for the future.

*Wafa' Tarnowska
Regional Manager for CSR and Arab Initiatives, DLA Piper*

ENHANCING ARAB CAPACITY FOR TRADE

EnACT, "Enhancing Arab Capacity for Trade" is an **International Trade Centre** (ITC) technical assistance facility funded in large part by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). Enact capitalises on the long term partnership and trade development expertise of ITC to develop the full export potential of the five programme countries: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia.

The countries covered by EnACT are characterised by having young demographics, are endowed with natural resources and strong

agricultural and industrial potential as well as a relative proximity to buyer markets in Europe, the Gulf's oil rich region and the rest of Africa. In addition, their own mutually growing markets have the strong potential to absorb products and services originated regionally.

Much work has already been done by individual countries and in some cases competitive products originating from these countries are already on international markets. EnACT intends to harness ITC's successful experiences around the globe to strengthen national export strategies, create further regional potential for intra-trade, enhance regional integration which is currently below potential; through further activating existing trade cooperation and agreements, creating easier access for competitive products and services.

EnACT works in coordination with other donors and UN specialised agencies. ITC will also use its global network to create trade and technical linkages between these countries and other emerging economies.

A particular area of focus for the EnACT program is to streamline the role of women and youth in export related activities. EnACT will pay particular attention to strengthening skill building activities, allowing for export related employment creation, in particular enabling women and youth to be more equipped to secure and sustain their jobs in the export sector.

*Meg Jones
Programme Development Advisor,
Women in Trade, International Trade Centre*

UNDERSTANDING MUSLIM CIVILISATIONS

The Institute for the Study of Muslim Civilisations, established in London in 2002 by the Aga Khan University, was founded with the mandate of strengthening research and teaching about the heritages of Muslim societies as they face the challenges of a rapidly globalising world. The higher education programmes offered at AKU-ISMC are distinctive because they are informed by historical, comparative and cultural studies perspectives, harnessing the concepts and approaches of the humanities and the social sciences. The Institute endeavours to build an understanding of the lived experiences of Muslim societies. Thus, Muslim cultures are considered within the framework of world cultures, exploring ways in which insights from the major world civilisations may bear upon the questions humanity faces today.

The MA in Muslim Cultures has been designed as a two-year degree programme, offering a distinctive way of understanding the plurality and complexity of Muslim cultures as they have evolved over time. The Institute's approach to learning emphasises analytical thinking, open debate and critique through the active participation of all students. Language immersion, fieldwork and the development of sound research methodologies are integral to the course. We invite you to learn more about the MA in Muslim Cultures at: www.aku.edu/ismc/ma.shtml

Currently there are 29 students completing their Master of Arts in Muslim Cultures at AKU-ISMC. The students come from a diverse range of backgrounds and countries including Afghanistan, Canada, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Pakistan, Syria, Tajikistan and Tunisia, and between them speak more than 9 languages. Approximately half of students are female.

Short Courses at AKU-ISMC present a unique platform for exploring various facets of Muslim civilisations, ranging from law to architecture to development – and a diverse range of subjects in between. Targeting audiences of professionals, diplomats and civil society leaders, the short courses normally take place at weekends and during the evenings. They combine the spirit of theoretical inquiry with practical training. A diverse student body, small class sizes and a well-rounded faculty result in a dynamic learning environment that is both academically sound and pedagogically stimulating. We invite you to learn more about the Short Courses at: www.aku.edu/ismc/shortcourses

*Charlotte Rayani
Resource Development Officer, Aga Khan University, AIWF Member*

NEWS FROM AIWF MEMBERS

HOSNA RACHID HONOURED



Mrs Hosna Rachid being presented with the order of the Aztec Eagle by HE Mr Jaime Nualart, the Mexican Ambassador to the Arab Republic of Egypt

On 18 May 2009, representing the President of Mexico, the Ambassador of Mexico to the Arab Republic of Egypt, HE Mr Jaime Nualart awarded Mrs Rachid, Chairperson of Rachid Mashreq Group, Alexandria, Egypt, the Order of the Aztec Eagle as a testimony of Mexico's profound appreciation for her valuable services and as an expression of the friendship ties between the two countries.

The Order of the Aztec Eagle is the highest presidential Mexican award and the only recognition given by the Mexican government to foreigners for services to Mexico or humankind to honour them for their exceptional contribution to Mexico.

Mrs Rachid is the second Egyptian to be recognised by Mexico with this award, following in the steps of her late father, Mr Mohamed Rachid, who in 1995 was the first Egyptian to be honoured in this way.

Mrs Rachid's relationship with Mexico started over 20 years ago with her tireless work to promote friendship, trade, understanding, cultural exchanges and tourism between Mexico and Egypt on a large scale.

Her duties as an honorary Consul of Mexico in Alexandria have been many and varied. She has given unfailing support by hosting, coordinating and sponsoring countless diverse Mexican events and trade delegations to both Alexandria and Cairo.

Born in Alexandria, Hosna Rachid is a prominent businesswoman and the chairperson of Rachid Mashreq Group, a holding company with various joint ventures such as Unilever Mashreq Group. She holds also the presidency of important associations such as the CCFE (French Chamber of Commerce in Egypt), the Confederation of Egyptian European Business Associations (CEEBA) representing 27 European countries, and ECUME (Echange Culturel Mediterranee) and is a valued AIWF member.

CONGRATULATIONS

to AIWF Board Member
The Honourable SAIDA AGREBI

and

to valued AIWF Member
Mrs RAJA AL GURG

on being selected for the
TIAW World of Difference 100 awards

This award recognises women whose efforts have advanced the economic empowerment of women locally, regionally or worldwide. The International Alliance for Women, an international umbrella organisation for women's networks, created this award last year to honour up to 100 women from around the world. Nominations were received from 6 continents and over 20 countries worldwide.

AIWF is particularly proud that two well-known and valued members have been honoured.

The Honourable SAIDA AGREBI is a Member of the Tunisian Parliament and Founder Board Member and Trustee of AIWF, Chairman of the Tunisian Mother's Association as well as the Maghreb Mother's Association. Saida has been involved at the highest level in Tunisia, the Arab World and internationally in women's organisations and she holds the title of consultant to a number of the UN organisations for women in development.

RAJA AL GURG of the United Arab Emirates is an outstanding businesswoman; she is Managing Director of the EASA SALEH AL GURG GROUP LLC with 18 divisions, encompassing Trading, Manufacturing and Real Estate and 5 Joint Venture MNC's with over 3000 employees and revenue in excess of \$2 billion. Raja gives encouragement to aspiring young entrepreneurs and has a very positive impact for women's economic empowerment in her leadership roles as Member of the Board of Dubai Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI), President of DCCI Business Women Committee and Federation of the UAE Chambers of Commerce and Industry Business Women Committee and valued member of AIWF.

The names of all the recipients of the Award will be announced at the TIAW World of Difference Awards Luncheon to be held on 19 October, 2009 in Toronto.

MS WASSILA BEN AMOR

Congratulations to **Ms Wassila Ben Amor**, a valued member of AIWF, who has been nominated as Chairman of the Alliance of Women Bankers in Tunisia.

GREEN SCHOOL HEALTHY SCHOOL

The Arab Federation for Environment Protection (AFEP) is organising its First Conference and Workshops under the Patronage of Dr Ahmad Ahmad Gowaily, President of the Arab Economic Unity Council (Arab League) in Collaboration with The International Chamber of Commerce, Lebanon. The Conference entitled *Green School Healthy School* will be held at the Intercontinental Phoenicia, Beirut from 2 to 3 November 2009.

Distinguished key speakers have been invited to address the conference and many high level institutions will be represented, including, UNESCO, USGBC, EU Commission for the Environment,

ISESCO, ALESCO (Arab Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organisation of the Arab League).

Panel and Workshop topics to be discussed relate to a wide range of environmental and ecological issues which are particularly relevant to the Arab region looking at them from the perspectives of education, health and safety, and the conservation of natural resources.

*Mona Ghalayini
President-General Manager, Ghalayini for Trade & Turnkey
AIWF Member*

SHOWCASING TRAILBLAZING, INSPIRATIONAL WOMEN LEADERS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

BREAKING THE STEREOTYPES

The advent of the global recession has highlighted a breakdown of many governance structures and institutions – in the economic, political and social spheres. World-class and worldwide organisations are currently re-assessing what it means to be a leader. In the West, these structures were synonymous with a different era, an era where men dominated the workplace and women stayed at home and looked after the family.

With the advent of technological advancements and the power of the Internet, traditional corporate structures are breaking down and new flatter organisational structures are increasingly recognised as successful; consequently, qualities naturally associated with female leadership, such as intuitiveness, flexibility and collaboration are now coming to the fore as qualities that are required for leadership in this new era.

Christina Ioannidis, CEO and Founder of Aquitude, a leading international leadership and organisational development consultancy and AIWF member, is launching *Breaking the Stereotypes: Showcasing Trailblazing, Inspirational Women Leaders in the Middle East* to promote inspirational women who are breaking the upheld stereotypes that western society may hold of the Middle East.

Aquitude will produce a best-practice report based on case studies of successful female business/thought leaders in the Middle East. A total of 25 women leaders in the Middle East will be interviewed during the end of 2009 and the beginning of 2010.

The interviews will capture the experiences of women role-models: women who are breaking perceived stereotypes by being successful in what would be traditionally associated with male-dominated or culturally challenging environments in the area/region in their own, balanced and creative leadership style.

The activity is designed to promote how a new leadership style and approach to life, one where ambition and social conscience coincide for both commercial and personal success. This leadership style is one inherent in Middle Eastern women who are trailblazing in a number of industries and at all levels of society.

Christina would be delighted to hear from AIWF members who would like to nominate a female role model whose work they feel deserves to be recognized.

Christina Ioannidis
CEO & Founder of Aquitude, www.aquitude.com
AIWF Member

THE ARAB WOMAN - THE CREATIVE WOMAN

The Anna Lindh Foundation (ALF) in cooperation with Kingston University will be hosting a two-day conference in April 2010 about and for Arab women in the creative sector. Creative women from the Arab world and the UK will be invited to network and share their experiences. The conference will gather a number of Arab creative women working as producers, filmmakers, novelists, journalists, writers, actresses, designers and performers, and it will shed new light on the role of Arab creative women as a link between cultures.

We will discuss the role of creativity in society, the obstacles that face Arab women in accessing or maintaining their positions in the creative sector whether in the Middle East or the UK; the prospects in this sector; the role of education in fostering creative talents and the need for a better networking opportunity between women in the UK/Europe and Arab regions. Through a dedicated virtual community, we will disseminate ideas debated in the conference and offer opportunities to link Arab women in the Middle East with counterparts in the UK. We will also publish selected contributions by the participants in a special volume of Viewpoints, issued by the Middle East Institute, Washington DC.

Dr Noha Mellor
Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences, Kingston University, London
AIWF Member

A GET-TOGETHER FOR AIWF AT MCM

Mrs Haifa Al Kaylani, as Chairman of AIWF, received an invitation from Mrs Sung Joo Kim, Chairman & CEO of the Sungjoo Group and MCM Holdings and a friend and former speaker at AIWF conferences, to host a tea reception at her flagship store in London.

Guests enjoyed warm hospitality and an enjoyable shopping experience leaving no one in any doubt that the renowned European luxury brand's comeback was clearly not only built upon the inspiration of decades-old heritage but even more so on the know-how of one of the world's most famous global business women.

Louise Gilks
Executive Administrator, AIWF

NETWORKING AT AIWF

More than 10 years ago I met Haifa Al Kaylani in London at the Embassy of Kuwait and I am forever grateful that she asked me to join AIWF. It opened a window for me to network with women from the Arab World and other countries.

Networking at AIWF has helped me to gain prestigious clients for my company, CMS Design Associates, which provides landscape architecture and garden design for both public and private clients around the world.

Some of my most interesting work has come from meeting women at AIWF meetings, providing me with work in the Middle East and in Africa to which I never would have had access without the AIWF networking connection. The projects in these parts of the world have made me develop in design and creativity and in new ways of problem solving.

I engage in conversation with people at the AIWF meetings and follow up by email. If an AIWF woman has a product or service to sell, I will give her a contact of a person needing her product or service. This is a vital part of networking.

For me networking is a strategy to accelerate success by making contacts and building mutually beneficial relationships. I very much believe that the best jobs come from word of mouth and this applies to AIWF too.

Having the chance to meet someone from another culture I otherwise might not have met is an incredible opportunity. We are a Global Village and AIWF is very much a bridge for us to develop friendships, business relationships and hopefully make the world a better place to live in.

Catharina Malmberg-Snodgrass
Managing Director, CMS Design Associates
AIWF Member

AIWF - MORE THAN A NETWORKING GROUP

In June 2008 I was asked by a friend to attend the AIWF conference in Washington on her behalf. Knowing nothing of the organisation, my expectation was to attend, visit the World Bank and distribute some business cards. At best, I hoped to meet some interesting participants and come away with a few new ideas. I was really not prepared for the impact that this one event would have on me. I am Algerian, educated in France but working in Tokyo, New York and living and working in London had not exposed me to the Middle East in any capacity. Attending the AIWF event has changed both my perceptions and my business activities within the region, not to mention enabling me to meet many new friends.

Mrs Haifa Al Kaylani has quickly become an inspiration and role model for me. I have personally benefited enormously as a result of her achievements. The AIWF is so much more than a networking group for women from a particular region. Here is a forum which offers a seamless platform for women to develop both personally and professionally. Haifa has removed the silo mentality between countries, regions, and cultures. Members can move uninhibited through these glass walls that so often restrict them, particularly as women. The confidence that I have found has enabled me to grow my business into an entirely new region. The mystery of the Middle East is evaporating.

Saliha Garah-Nielsen
Blue Sky Strategy, AIWF Member

AIWF GLOBAL PARTNERS

SHELL: DEVELOPMENT AND DIVERSITY

Shell is governed by a set of general business principles that have shaped the way in which we do business for more than three decades. Our core values of honesty, integrity and respect are applied to all factors of the decision making process. We recognize the importance of stakeholder engagement, the value of being a good neighbour in the communities in which we operate, and upholding both international and domestic laws and regulations. A significant pillar of our business principles is the adherence to sustainable development, which for us means helping to meet the world's growing energy needs in an *economically, environmentally, and socially* responsible way.

In the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) we actively endeavor to address the region's prime development challenge of human capacity building, with a focus on human capital investment in the energy sector, a critical source of growth in many MENA economies.

Shell is very keen to focus its social investment in areas that are aligned with local government's development policies. In some parts of the Middle East, the presence of oil has created a unique 'rentier' economy challenge and often an under-investment in human capital resulting in a lower quality of education. Experts suggest that the MENA region needs to diversify its economy away from the oil and gas sector and focus instead on private sector growth as a source of employment. There is also a clear need to enhance the quality and type of education such that the output of educational institutions more clearly matches the needs of local industry.

Shell understands that we can add most value by not just contributing in financial terms through our regional social investment strategy, but also by providing additional value through expertise and technology to grow regional talent pools. As a leader in the energy industry, we try to focus our regional investments in areas that can help create a strong and relevant local talent pool to fill the vacancies that we have in the sector.

Globally, our employment ethics stress the importance of diversity and inclusiveness to create a workforce that mirrors the communities in which we operate. By actively encouraging top talent of local nationals and women in Shell, we can achieve a better understanding of the communities in which we operate and build stronger relationships that lead to business success. These values are applied through initiatives such as the Middle East Talent Council, a dedicated council of cross business leaders that seeks to recruit and represent local talent into key senior positions.

Our recruitment processes are standardised worldwide and they incorporate clear policies to encourage diversity. All staff involved in recruitment receive regular training for this purpose. This includes learning the dos and don'ts for every recruitment stage, from first meetings with graduates to interviews and final selection. For example, when we visit a business school campus, we always ensure that we have a diverse team representing Shell, whether it's in terms of ethnic background, gender or skillset. Diversity goes right through our

recruitment process, even before we meet candidates. It feeds into our advertising, the language we use and our approach to all forms of recruitment marketing. It's all done with diversity at the back of our mind. This has led to relative success, in the recruitment of women, for example. In the UK in 2006, 40% of Shell's recruits for technical roles were female - this is actually 10% higher than the proportion of women that study science and technology degrees at British universities.

Our social investment portfolio includes a range of long-term commitments and activities related to education and knowledge transfer in the energy sector. The Intilaaqah initiative through Shell-LiveWIRE focuses on encouraging nationals to consider entrepreneurship as a career choice, by providing a free training course and practical advice to start a successful business. In each country, Shell works with a number of local partners - such as academic institutions, chambers of commerce, and local banks, to ensure the long-term sustainability of the programme.

Shell is also part of a range of innovative programmes designed to encourage specific technical expertise in the local workforce such that both the host country and our business benefit. In Qatar, Shell has initiated the Qatar Shell Research and Technology Centre (QSRTC) as an anchor tenant in the Qatar Science and Technology Park. A team of thirty-five people, including five Qatari nationals, are working on various technology projects including a cutting-edge GTL R&D programme and research in carbonate reservoirs. The QSRTC also offers a number of fully funded PhD and postdoctoral scholarships at Imperial College London in engineering-related subjects. In the UAE, Shell is a main sponsor and long-term partner of the Abu Dhabi Petroleum Institute, which was established by ADNOC to offer education in geosciences and engineering. And in Oman, Shell launched the Shell Technology Centre, an EOR (Enhanced Oil Recovery) Research and Development hub, in close partnership with the Oil and Gas Research Centre of Sultan Qaboos University and Petroleum Development Oman (PDO).

On the global development front, the Shell Foundation was launched in 2000 as an independent registered charity that takes an 'enterprise-based' approach to social investment, by applying business thinking to solve challenges linked to globalisation and the use of energy.

Sustainable development is part of a long-term process of business integrity, rather than a tangible end goal. This approach has shaped our commitments in social investment by focusing on projects that reflect the needs of local stakeholders, whilst also allowing Shell to add value to the projects by strategically selecting ones that are related to the business interest: the result means we have just as much interest in maintaining our sustainable development practices as the communities which are benefiting from them.

Clare Woodcraft
Director of Communications for Shell International

**AIWF WOULD LIKE TO ACKNOWLEDGE WITH APPRECIATION
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EVENTS SUPPORTED BY AIWF

27-28 October 2009

ARAB-BRITISH ECONOMIC FORUM

*Hosted in London by
Arab-British Chamber of Commerce*

22 November 2009

**BUSINESS FORUM
& WOMEN BUSINESS LEADERS SUMMIT**

*Hosted in Marrakesh by
Middle East & North Africa:
Organisation for Economic Cooperation & Development
Investment Programme*

23 November 2009

**THE WORLD IN 2010:
BUILDING A NEW WORLD ORDER**

*Hosted in Abu Dhabi by
The Economist*

April 2010

WOMEN IN BUSINESS AWARD 2010

*Hosted in Doha, Qatar by
UNCTAD/EMPRETEC*

**AIWF JORDAN SEMINAR
TO BE HELD ON 19 OCTOBER, 2009 IN AMMAN**

Directorship, Development and Diversity: Challenges for Women in Governance is the theme of this Seminar to be held by AIWF in collaboration with the Hawkamah Institute of Corporate Governance, DIFC and the Mudara Institute of Directors (IOD) and in cooperation with and jointly hosted in partnership with the Business and Professional Women's Federation-Amman, Jordan and the International Women's Forum, Jordan Chapter, with the valuable support of AIWF distinguished Global Partners, DLA Piper and the World Bank. A very distinguished group of speakers will address the theme and this will be followed by a panel of high profile Jordanian women leaders who have achieved success in business, the professions and corporate roles who will exchange ideas and share information on the theme of Challenges for Women in Corporate Governance in Jordan. This event is designed to put corporate governance squarely onto the Arab business agenda as a valuable tool for women entrepreneurs looking to integrate their businesses into the global marketplace.

HOW TO JOIN AIWF

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