

ARAB INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FORUM

With the valued co-operation of
THE LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES

The Third Annual AIWF Conference
6-9 June 2004-07-02

Women in the Arab World
Partners in the Community and on the World Stage

CONFERENCE RECCOMENDATIONS

The Arab International Women's Forum is committed to enhancing the role of Arab women and optimising their potential. We firmly believe that the economic, social and political development of the region can only be truly achieved when women are fully engaged and included in all aspects of Arab society and its leadership.

Participants at the AIWF Third Annual Conference held at the League of Arab States in Cairo, and with their support, June 2004, have put forward the following recommendations:

1. The inclusion of Arab women in the political decision-making process and support for their full engagement in public life at all levels -- municipal, regional and central – was viewed as a priority recommendation.
2. Formal recognition of, and support for, organisations in civil society where women have played, and continue to play an important role, in order that women may have more influence and greater impact on social development.
3. Women as engines of economic growth:
 - To create the right conditions to examine pay and benefits for female employees, address issues of discrimination in the private sector and ensure that work places are family friendly for all employees.
 - Women have been very successful in starting small and medium-sized businesses globally. Women in the Arab world must be given the appropriate levels of financial support through micro credit as well as technical assistance. Additional vocational training should be established so that women may set up more SMEs in the region with greater ease.
4. It was generally agreed that greater recognition of the role of women outside the home is needed, and that the portrayal of women in the media must be changed in order to reflect the image of the new Arab woman.
5. A most important factor relating to women's involvement in all aspects of society is the need for better education, for investment in e-learning, and equipping women with IT, business and management skills.
6. It is important to highlight success stories and best practices emanating from the region and to emphasize the value of role models.

The Arab International Women's Forum along with the valued support of its members and partners, is fully committed to the above recommendations and shall be actively engaged, working together with partners, to achieve them.