



ARAB INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FORUM

# The Arab International Women's Forum and The Sharjah Business Women Council: *Partnership for Innovation in Entrepreneurship.*

Journeys of Businesswomen in the UAE and the UK

المنتدى العربي الدولي للمرأة ومجلس سيدات أعمال  
الشارقة: شراكة من أجل الابتكار في ريادة الأعمال

مسيرات سيدات الأعمال في الإمارات العربية المتحدة والمملكة المتحدة

CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS

Wednesday, 27 July 2016

11.30 am – 1.00 pm

The Mountbatten Room, The Royal Automobile Club,  
London

## Opening Remarks & Acknowledgements

Your Highness Sheikha Jawaher bint Mohammed Al Qasimi,

Distinguished Guests,

It is truly a great honour and a pleasure for me, both personally and as Founder Chairman of The Arab International Women's Forum (AIWF), to welcome you all today on this special occasion held under the Patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Jawaher bint Mohammed Al Qasimi, Wife of His Highness the Ruler of Sharjah, Chairperson of Nama Women Advancement Establishment and Founder & Patron of The Sharjah Business Women Council.

I wish to extend on behalf of the AIWF Board and Members our sincere appreciation and deepest thanks to Her Highness Sheikha Jawaher for accepting our invitation. We are indeed honored by Your Highness valued presence.

AIWF greatly appreciates the full and invaluable support of our valued Global Partner The Sharjah Business Women Council in organising this seminar, *Partnership for Innovation in Entrepreneurship*, showcasing journeys of businesswomen in the UAE and the UK.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge the important work of Her Highness Sheikha Jawaher in encouraging women's entrepreneurship through her founding of the Sharjah Business Women's Council, which

works to eliminate barriers and promote social and economic stability, supporting women and enhancing the vital role they play in the development of Sharjah, the UAE and the wider Arab region.

I also take this opportunity to acknowledge the valued co-operation of HE Ms Ameera Binkaram, Chairperson of the Executive Committee of the Sharjah Business Women Council, and her valued colleagues. We are especially proud of this initiative as both AIWF and SBWC share a mutual vision to support women as engines of economic and social growth, to develop their business skills and empower them with the confidence, networks and resources to break new ground in entrepreneurship and public life.

A recent study shows that globally entrepreneurs who are more committed to innovation drive economic growth and create jobs at more than twice the rate of established companies. Innovative entrepreneurs (defined as entrepreneurs who created an entirely new product or service in the past year) are 95% more likely to increase their workforce over the next year. For the Arab world, we see a clear link between investing in innovative entrepreneurs as job creators, and narrowing the youth unemployment gap in the region, which is still the highest in the world.

Supporting entrepreneurs as drivers of economic growth through job creation has been at the heart of the vision of AIWF since its inception in 2001. AIWF is proud to collaborate with the Sharjah Business Women Council on this seminar to exchange knowledge and ideas as to how we

can best support women as business leaders, mentors and role models for the next generation , to use perseverance and fresh thinking to overcome obstacles; to anticipate and embrace change and continually improve and innovate their businesses; to differentiate themselves, to think ahead and think globally, and improve opportunities for women and young people in the wider community.

We believe that a brighter future for Arab women entrepreneurs can be achieved. It is only by working together, building networks and establishing strong cultural and business connections that we can create the foundations necessary to support them.

With Your Highness valued Patrnage and presence and the contributions of our distinguished panelists, I trust that our joint seminar will be an informative, invaluable and productive experience for us all.

Thank you for your kind attention.