



# ARAB INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FORUM

## المنتدى العربي الدولي للمرأة

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### AIWF Founder & Chairman's Message

As Founder & Chairman of the Arab International Women's Forum (AIWF), I am proud to share with you this edition of the AIWF Newsletter for March / April 2020. This year, AIWF celebrates 19 years since its founding in London in 2001 with the clear aim of supporting women's leadership in social and economic growth in the MENA region and internationally. AIWF's mission has long been to empower the underutilised 50% of the Arab population to contribute to economic growth in the MENA States within a global environment and within an international framework. Without empowering that 50% of women in public life, in business, in civil society, in all the Arab world will not be able to achieve its development, prosperity, peace, progress. This has been our founding principle from the beginning.

In its 19 years, AIWF has become a leading advocacy platform for women leaders in the MENA region promoting their role as engines of economic growth and social development. AIWF has continually broken new ground throughout our history with our outreach and impact acknowledged and recognised by the international institutions, governments and leading private sector actors. AIWF's 2019 Programme, following the momentum AIWF has created over past years, has given us an excellent foundation on which to build and take forward our 2020 Annual Programme, which will honour key SDGs on gender equality and sustainability.

In April 2019, AIWF partnered with the American University of Beirut and the University of Massachusetts Medical School on a key initiative for *Women Leaders & Health*, which brought into focus empowerment challenges and opportunities for women's leadership in research, innovation, medical education and healthcare delivery. A half-day interactive workshop was included in the conference programme, titled *Addressing maternal and child health in conflict/vulnerable settings in the MENA region*, which welcomed distinguished speakers representing the World Bank, the ESCWA Center for Women, the Ministry of Public Health in Lebanon, the Lebanese Order of Midwives, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and Medecins Sans Frontieres.

AIWF was proud to follow this excellent initiative up with a second major conference as part of our



*Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani, Founder & Chairman of the Arab International Women's Forum*

2019 Annual Programme, titled *Women as Engines of Economic Growth* in Egypt in September, held in partnership with the American University in Cairo as part of AUC's Centenary Year Celebrations, and with the valued support of PepsiCo and PwC. The conference delivered a rich and full day of conference discussions on empowering women in business, on boards, in public service, in entrepreneurship and social enterprise and in addressing Future of Work challenges for the region. The conference attracted delegates from across the Arab world and internationally, representing Spain, South Africa, Switzerland, Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Mauritius, Malaysia, Austria and Cyprus.

Both the Beirut and Cairo conferences in 2019 produced Special Reports with strong sets of impactful, substantive and actionable Recommendations published and shared with all key actors in AIWF's global advocacy network, extending AIWF's impact and making a meaningful contribution to development and the realisation of the core SDGs in these areas. Both conference initiatives strengthened AIWF's solid commitment to empowering women's leadership in business and in public service, and of AIWF's ability to bring business, STEM, sustainability and international development leaders together to engage with complex issues that have real significance for women and young people in the region.

As we enter a new decade and as efforts to meet the SDGs by 2030 intensify across all sectors and spheres, AIWF looks forward to convening all our valued partners in government, business, civil society, academia and media to develop a strong, cohesive and collaborative response to persistent barriers around the capacity, skills and leadership of Arab women. In all that we do, we are keen to reflect and reinforce our

strong belief that empowering women is key to peace, progress and security in the MENA Region.

Therefore, in 2020, and looking ahead to our milestone 20th Anniversary in 2021, the Arab International Women's Forum, our Global Benefactor Partner PepsiCo and all our Global Partners reiterate our shared commitment to addressing issues of global and regional concern that deeply impact women's lives, their livelihoods, their security and prosperity. Key areas of focus will include economic empowerment, financial inclusion, technology and innovation, social entrepreneurship, rural empowerment, lifelong learning, and sustainability across the board. AIWF aims to bring all our valued Global Partners, Members and institutional collaborators in our international advocacy network to collectively mitigate challenges and innovate new solutions through open engagement, dialogue and collaboration at all levels.

Importantly, with regard to the AIWF 2020 Annual Programme, due to the current global situation and concerns over the spread of coronavirus limiting travel and international participation at key global events and conferences, the Board of AIWF has taken the decision to postpone until later in the year AIWF's planned conferences and Keynote Reception events that were originally planned for the first two quarters of 2020. Once current travel restrictions are lifted, AIWF will be pleased to share our programme plans with all our valued Partners, Members and supporters, both by email and in a forthcoming edition of AIWF News.

With regard to our valued Partners I take this opportunity to congratulate **Eugene Willemssen** who was recently appointed CEO of PepsiCo MENA Asia and Africa. The longstanding and deeply valued partnership between PepsiCo and AIWF was realised with the Memorandum of Understanding signed between PepsiCo and AIWF in 2010, and since then, AIWF's conferences, initiatives and special programmes to empower women and young people towards greater economic participation and social cohesion have received the generous ongoing support of PepsiCo AMENA which has truly enabled AIWF to make the deep and lasting impact that it has in the MENA region and internationally. Together, AIWF and PepsiCo are perfectly positioned to make a real impact on key issues addressing women's leadership in public service, business and entrepreneurship, and agriculture and entrepreneurship in the rural economy, in the MENA region and globally.

Indeed, AIWF is exceptionally proud to work closely with all our global corporate and institutional partners to promote and prioritise the engagement of women and youth and towards finding innovative and actionable solutions to the multi-faceted and complex environmental, economic security, and developmental challenges the MENA region faces. AIWF Benefactor Partner PepsiCo and Global Partners

Pfizer, Shell, NAMA, PwC, Vistra, Northern Trust and Boodle Hatfield are all deeply committed to supporting women and youth across the Arab world and in their global operations, and to finding innovative solutions to key development challenges that are limiting progress for women and for economic growth.

This is where AIWF leads and how AIWF has become well-known in the international development community; we move the agenda for Arab women forward by identifying salient development issues and working with likeminded multisectoral partners to create dynamic initiatives for action and awareness around these issues. Key stakeholders from the private sector, governments, civil society, academia and media come to AIWF and engage with AIWF initiatives and events because they see our credibility, our vision and our track record in effecting positive change throughout the region and within the international framework.

In this issue of AIWF News, we are pleased to update on AIWF's participation in two high-level initiatives in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In December 2019, I had the honour of attending the 3rd Arab-China Women's Forum in Riyadh at the Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University, at the kind invitation of the Ministry of Labour and Social Development and the League of Arab States. I was indeed delighted to return to the Kingdom for this very special and high-level occasion, having visited on a number of occasions in the past. The excellent Forum programme resonated greatly with me as Chairman of AIWF, which has championed the role of civil society for nearly two decades. AIWF looks forward to supporting the League of Arab States in its admirable aims to strengthen the non-profit sector and social enterprise in Saudi Arabia and the broader Arab world.

Following my participation at the 3rd edition of the Arab-Chinese Women's Forum, AIWF received an invitation from the Council of Family Affairs in Saudi Arabia and the League of Arab States to attend the 39th Session of the Arab Women's Committee and Regional Preparatory Meeting for the 64th Session on the Status of Women in the United Nations in February 2020 in Riyadh. AIWF was very well represented by **Dr Afnan Al Shuaiby**, former CEO & Secretary General of the Arab British Chamber of Commerce in London and our valued AIWF Board Member, who participated in this vital initiative which focuses on empowering women and advancing their status at the Arab level to enhance economic empowerment and political participation across the Arab Region.


This issue covers an excellent new initiative of the World Bank Group and its partners to improve access to finance for MSMEs in the MENA Region. The invaluable partnership and generous cooperation extended to AIWF in the past by the World Bank in the MENA Region, together with the longstanding support

of the World Bank team in Washington DC, have been instrumental to the success of AIWF. Both AIWF and the World Bank have long shared the common view that supporting all segments of the community and indeed women is a prerequisite for the peace, prosperity and stability which we all seek in the region.

We are also proud to acknowledge within this issue the many awards and achievements of our valued Partners, Members and Board Members. AIWF offers its warmest congratulations to our longstanding Global Partner PwC Middle East on receiving the Best Emiratisation Supporting Entity Award presented by **HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum** in Dubai in February 2020 and received on behalf of PwC Middle East by Senior Territory Partner PwC and AIWF Board Member **Hani Ashkar**. The issue commends our Board Members **Dr Afnan Al Shuaiby** on receiving a number of distinguished leadership awards in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and **HE Mona Al Moayyed** on her inclusion in the Forbes' Middle East 100 Businesswomen List. We are pleased to congratulate AIWF Board Member **Sana Bardawil** on the completion of her Masters Degree at Leiden University, and the Board of AIWF joins me in bidding a very fond farewell to **Saada Hammad**, who has recently retired after ten excellent years at Mema Ogilvy, AIWF's valued Global Communications Partner, as Regional Director for Ogilvy PR & Influence in MENA.

I am also pleased to share in this issue an exciting update on the Schwarzman Scholarship outreach which AIWF was proud to support in 2019, putting forth talented candidates from the Arab world for consideration for this prestigious scholarship. One of the candidates nominated by AIWF with the support of Injaz in Jordan was **Lina Abojaradeh**, who was successful in the highly competitive selection for the Schwarzman Scholars programme, and we wish Lina all success with this exciting new phase of her personal and professional development.

On behalf of the Board and Partners of the Arab International Women's Forum I wish you all a highly productive and innovative start to 2020. I am personally looking forward to sharing AIWF's 2020 Annual Programme with you in due course and as we continue to monitor the global situation carefully, and especially to welcoming you all to AIWF's next major conferences in the UK and the MENA Region in the near future. I trust you will enjoy this rich issue of AIWF News.



**Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani**  
Founder & Chairman  
Arab International Women's Forum

## Special message from the AIWF Chairman on International Women's Day

**The Arab International Women's Forum is proud to honour UN Women's International Women's Day theme, *I am Generation Equality: Realizing Women's Rights*, through its 2020 Annual Programme marking the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action**

Each year, The Arab International Women's Forum (AIWF) is proud to join the international development community in celebrating International Women's Day (IWD), a focal point in the global call for action on women's empowerment. IWD 2020 is a vital opportunity for us all to reflect on the remarkable progress and remaining challenges for women in the MENA Region and globally, and to honour exemplary women leaders who are paving a brighter, more equitable and prosperous future in their countries and their communities for the next generation.

Celebrated on 08 March each year, IWD signals the launch of a truly remarkable global year-long event that celebrates women's achievements in the political, economic and social realms while calling for gender equality. AIWF, as one of the leading development organisations focused on supporting the empowerment of women leaders in all sectors and spheres, throughout the MENA and internationally, is proud to launch its 2020 Annual Programme on this occasion which, as always, will bring together key governmental partners, grassroots and institutional women's organisations, the private sector, civil society and most importantly, women themselves to address gender equality and strategise innovative and sustainable solutions for the empowerment challenges that remain.

This year, AIWF is especially proud to support UN Women's 2020 IWD theme of *I am Generation Equality: Realizing Women's Rights*, which is aligned with UN Women's new multigenerational campaign, *Generation Equality*, marking the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Adopted in 1995 at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China, the Beijing Platform for Action is recognized as the most progressive roadmap for the empowerment of women and girls, everywhere. Just last month, AIWF was represented at the 39th Session of the Arab Women's Committee and Regional Preparatory Meeting for the 64th Session on the Status of Women in the United Nations, held on 9 and 10 February 2020 in Riyadh. The Forum renewed Arab commitment to the principles of the Beijing Platform for Action and delivered key messages and recommendations from the member states of the Arab League relating to the implementation of Beijing



Platform for Action, to which AIWF was proud to contribute.

In all of AIWF's initiatives and activities, AIWF remains committed to supporting all stakeholders in our societies and communities but especially women and young people themselves as a prerequisite for the peace, prosperity and stability which we all seek in the region. AIWF has a long and proven history in leading on initiatives that ultimately share this critical objective – to support the empowerment of women and young people in business, in private sector development which is so needed in the region, and ensuring full economic, social and cultural inclusion for all citizens of the Arab world.

AIWF as an NGO Member of the UN Global Compact is focussed on integrating the SDGs and other key global development goals into the programming of its conferences, reports, initiatives and activities. Honouring SDG 5, *Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls*, AIWF is proud to have led with a key empowerment initiative for Young Arab Women Leaders, launched in 2011 to feature a series of ten landmark conferences thus far in the Arab world and in London. Each conference has brought together women leaders from over 20 countries representing a diverse range of sectors to come up with key recommendations for empowering the next generation and to make valuable new business, research and project links. The *Young Arab Women Leaders* initiative looks set to continue into the new decade with renewed emphasis on SDG5 and specifically on addressing gender equality for the next generation of young leaders in business, civil society and public service, in the Arab world and globally.

At AIWF, we see this as a pivotal year for advancing gender equality and promoting women's inclusion worldwide. Globally as well as in the MENA Region, boosting the number of women in the economy is not just a moral imperative but also has a clear and measurable impact on the prosperity, stability and economic health of a region. In the Arab world, women are being empowered by education and an improved landscape across the board, from the top down as well as bottom up because society overall has become more open to women in leadership positions. There is growing evidence that in many MENA countries such as Saudi Arabia, UAE and Egypt, the gender equality agenda is progressing at full pace.

To give just a few examples, the Saudi government's ambitious target to increase female participation in the workforce to 30% as part of Vision 2030 is already bearing fruit – in the Kingdom, labour-force participation of women was 14.2% in 1990 and reached 23% in 2019, according to data from the World Bank. Saudi Arabia has experienced the



Photo: Paula Kindsvater CC BY-SA 4.0

highest growth rate among G20 countries of women joining the workforce in the past 20 years. The UAE government has also taken a clear leadership role in promoting gender equality in the workplace as a key pillar of the UAE government's Vision 2021 initiative; currently in 46th place in the United Nations Development Programme's Gender Inequality Index, the UAE aims to be one of the world's top 25 countries for gender equality through its Vision 2021.

In Egypt, the Prime Minister announced in June 2018 that the new government would include eight women ministers, comprising a historic 25% of the cabinet, reflecting a trend across the region that is seeing more women appointed to key ministerial positions holding diverse portfolios that have been traditionally led by men. In Jordan that same month, women celebrated a record number of female ministers, with 7 women appointed to cabinet seats out of 29 cabinet seats in the new government. Morocco also has some of the most gender progressive laws in the region and one of the largest percentages of women in parliament, 21% in 2019, surpassing the quota that mandates 15% of parliamentary seats for women. In Lebanon in the last government (in 2019) there were 4 female ministers one of whom was appointed as Minister of the Interior; whereas the new cabinet announced in January 2020 increased to six female ministers, among them the Minister of Defense (also appointed Deputy Prime Minister) – firsts not only for Lebanon, but for the entire Arab world.

As the drive towards achieving gender equality gains traction in the MENA Region, women have more opportunities than ever to contribute meaningfully to economic transformation, stability and private sector growth in the Arab world. AIWF has been on this journey with Arab women for the last two decades and we see the vast progress Arab women have made as well as the challenges that remain. These include a lack of private sector jobs to override the persistent preference in the region for public sector employment, a lack of support for women after a career break or maternity leave, deep-seated social norms that place the burden of family and household care predominantly on to women, and gender stereotypes and bias – both conscious and unconscious – that

persist within the workplace and within our cultures and societies more broadly.

Despite these challenges the gender equality agenda overall is progressing across the region. While the progress is undeniable, there is much more to be done and governments and the private sector alike will clearly need to take bold actions to advance momentum for gender equality in the workforce, in public office, in entrepreneurship, in academia, the media, and in our societies and our communities at all levels.

As we look to an exciting new decade ahead, and our 20th Anniversary in 2021, AIWF will convene empowerment organisations and change agents from both the Arab world and the global community to mobilize action around the key challenges outlined above. AIWF and our Global Partners remain dedicated to achieving positive, sustainable growth for women and young people and to push forward the momentum for gender equality to empower and support the next generation of change makers, thought leaders, innovators and champions of equality, diversity and inclusion in all its forms.

Collectively, we all have a vital role to play in driving gender equality for our young people so that it becomes the norm for the new generation. We can all use our various platforms to celebrate the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women whilst contributing to the IWD call for action. By working together in partnership, we can accelerate gender equality in all spheres and all spheres and towards the achievement of the ambitious Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on advancing gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

In this regard, the 2020 IWD call for action is very much at the heart of what AIWF has been doing at the Arab and international level for nearly two decades to create a more stable and more balanced future for women and youth in the MENA region and internationally through economic inclusion, diversity, leadership development, capacity and skills building for all young people, women as well as men. As Founder & Chairman and on behalf of the Board of AIWF, I take this opportunity to extend my warmest wishes to all AIWF Partners, Members, friends and the women advocates and grassroots organisations all over the world who are working tirelessly to honour the spirit and mission of International Women's Day.

*Haifa Al Kaylani*

**Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani**

Founder & Chairman

Arab International Women's Forum

## AIWF Chairman attends the Arab-China Women's Forum in Riyadh highlighting the role of the non-profit sector in empowering women's leadership



*AIWF Chairman Haifa Al Kaylani attended the 3rd Arab-China Women's Forum in Riyadh in December 2019*

In December 2019, the Chairman of the Arab International Women's Forum **Haifa Al Kaylani** attended the 3rd edition of the Arab-Chinese Women's Forum organised by the Ministry of Labour and Social Development in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in collaboration with the League of Arab States. The Forum was held at the Princess Nourah Bint Abdul Rahman University in Riyadh on 19 - 20 December 2019.

The Forum aimed to spotlight the role of the non-profit sector in supporting women in the professional, social, health and economic domains. Held under the patronage of the Saudi Arabia Minister of Labour and Social Development **HE Ahmad Bin Salman Al Rajhi** the Forum was attended by **Inas bint Suleiman Al-Issa**, Director of the Princess Nourah Bint Abdul Rahman University, **Hala Al Tuwajiri**, Secretary General of the Family Affairs Council in the Kingdom, and representatives of the League of Arab States, the All-China Women's Federation, the Council of Arab Businesswomen and the Arab-African Conference for Businesswomen, as well as delegates from civil society and the private sector from across the region and globally.

The Forum programme included a series of lectures, workshops and discussion seminars on the role of non-profit sector initiatives in women's empowerment, women and investment, the position of women in Arab and China cultures, building women's capabilities in digitization and technology, and prospects for partnership between Arab and Chinese women. In 2020 as Saudi Arabia becomes the first Arab country to take on the G20 Presidency, AIWF stands ready with all valued stakeholders to support all initiatives and activities in the Kingdom, to empower, support and develop young women leaders and foster sustainable development in the region and beyond.

## Her Highness Sheikha Jawaher Al Qasimi launches Elevate to accelerate goals of women's economic empowerment and gender equity

AIWF offers its sincere congratulations to **Her Highness Sheikha Jawaher Bint Mohammed Al Qasimi**, wife of the Ruler of Sharjah and Chairperson of NAMA Women Advancement Establishment (NAMA), who has taken forward the global call to action for gender equity and women's economic empowerment with the launch of 'Elevate', a pioneering platform to support women in the low- and medium-income countries in Asia, Africa, South America, and the Caribbean.

The launch of Elevate comes in the backdrop of a pledge made by the Ruler of Sharjah at the opening ceremony of the 2019 Women's Economic Empowerment Global Summit (WEEGS) where his Highness extended support for a programme that would help shift the needle on women's economic empowerment across Asia, Africa, South America and the Caribbean.

Elevate is founded on six core pillars (CPs) namely, promote the implementation of effective laws and policies to promote gender equity; promote greater inclusion of women in leadership and supply chains; enhance women's access to finance and other productive assets; promote initiatives that enable education, training and capacity building for women; ensure regular measurement and public reporting on progress and challenges; and create inclusive societies.

To ensure that the transformative vision enshrined within the core pillars of Elevate directly impacts the lives of women and helps in the building of stronger, more inclusive economies, the platform will bring together its strategic partners, chapter leaders and chapter members to take concerted action in realizing its key goals.

Elevate's head office led by NAMA will hold annual meetings with members and partners to discuss the successes and challenges in promoting the platform's core pillars and goals. To meet these goals, Elevate will impart technical assistance to chapter leaders to enable them to provide education support to female employees, entrepreneurs, and women-led SMEs in the targeted countries with the support of chapter members.

AIWF is proud to have NAMA as a Global Partner of the Arab International Women's Forum and wishes Her Highness and the esteemed NAMA team the very best with this admirable and timely initiative.

## AIWF congratulates Eugene Willemssen on his appointment as CEO of PepsiCo

The Chairman and Board of the Arab International Women's Forum extend their warmest congratulations to **Eugene Willemssen** on his appointment as Chief Executive Officer, Africa, Middle East, South Asia, PepsiCo. Since 2015, Eugene Willemssen has served on the PepsiCo Executive Committee, reporting to the Chairman and CEO.



*Eugene Willemssen, Chief Executive Officer, Africa, Middle East, South Asia, PepsiCo*

Most recently, Eugene served as Chief Executive Officer, Sub-Saharan Africa, PepsiCo. From 2015 to 2019, he served as Executive Vice President of Global Categories & Franchise Management where he was responsible for the strategic direction of PepsiCo's global categories and brands as well as PepsiCo's global commercial functions, during which he oversaw a period of strong growth.

Prior to that, Eugene led the company's global tea joint venture with Unilever, which operates in roughly 120 countries worldwide, following more than a decade leading PepsiCo businesses in Europe. He has served as SVP, General Manager for PepsiCo's South East Europe business, overseeing operations in 17 countries, including Turkey; SVP, Commercial for PepsiCo Europe, heading up the Marketing & Sales functions across Europe for all lines of business; SVP, General Manager for PepsiCo Northern Europe; and General Manager of PepsiCo's snack business in the Benelux and Belgium. Eugene joined PepsiCo from Unilever in 1995.

Eugene holds a BBA from Nijenrode University in the Netherlands, a MSc in Economics from the "VU University" in Amsterdam and an Executive MBA from INSEAD. He has been a Board Member of the ANA, the AdCouncil and the Dutch Grocery Manufacturers Association, where he served as its Chairman. In 2017, he was named one of the '25 Most Influential People in the Netherlands at 50'.

On behalf of the Board of AIWF, Haifa Al Kaylani has written to Mr Willemssen to extend AIWF's deepest appreciation to PepsiCo for the continued and valued support and endorsement as AIWF's Exclusive Global Benefactor Partner. AIWF's growing outreach in the international development community and the positive impact of our initiatives on women's leadership and development in the region and beyond have only been possible because of the partnership and support of PepsiCo and all our valued Global and Institutional Partners over the last 19 years.



AIWF is proud to continue our close cooperation and partnership with the esteemed PepsiCo leadership on all matters of mutual concern, including economic empowerment for women and future young leaders, food sustainability and water scarcity.

## AIWF represented by Board Member Dr Afnan Al Shuaiby at the 39th Session of the Arab Women's Committee Meeting in Riyadh in February 2020



*Dr Afnan Al Shuaiby, valued AIWF Board Member & Former CEO & Secretary General of the Arab-British Chamber of Commerce, representing AIWF at the 39th session of the Arab Women's Committee in Riyadh in February 2020*

The Arab International Women's Forum was represented at the 39th Session of the Arab Women's Committee and Regional Preparatory Meeting for the 64th Session on the Status of Women in the United Nations, held on 9 and 10 February 2020 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

AIWF was invited by **Dr Hala Al Tuwaijri**, Secretary General, Council for Family Affairs and **Dr Haifa Abu Ghazala**, Assistant Secretary-General & Head of the Social Affairs Sector, League of Arab States to participate in this vital meeting on empowering women and advancing their status at the Arab level to enhance their economic empowerment and political participation across the region and internationally, as well as following up the implementation of the SDGs and the Women, Security and Peace Agenda.

Representing AIWF on this special occasion was **Dr Afnan Al Shuaiby**, valued AIWF Board Member and former Secretary General & CEO of the Arab-British Chamber of Commerce in London. The Arab Regional Preparatory Meeting for the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women was held in cooperation with UN Women and other international partners to reach a consensus Arab statement to be submitted to the 64th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women. Key topics included the report of the General Secretariat's activity between the previous and the current sessions, the 2030 agenda

for sustainable development, women's empowerment in the Arab world, and the follow-up to the recommendations of the Ministerial Conference that focused on women's empowerment and its impact on social development.

The Meeting renewed the Arab region's commitment to the principles of the Beijing Platform for Action and delivered key messages and recommendations from the member states of the Arab League relating to the implementation of Beijing Platform for Action, to which AIWF was proud to contribute. These messages will reflect the priorities of the region for the next five years to coincide with the next regional review of 'Beijing + 30' and reflect regional perspectives in relation to the twelve critical areas of concern and issues around the empowerment of women in the Arab region. The 1995 Beijing Platform for Action flagged 12 key areas where urgent action was needed to ensure greater equality and opportunities for women and men, girls and boys. The areas of concern include: women and poverty; education and training of women; women and health; violence against women; women in armed conflict; women and the economy; human rights of women; and women and the environment.

Key messages and recommendations emerging from the meeting will be presented in a report during the 64th session of the Commission on the Status of Women at the United Nations in New York in March 2020. The Preparatory Meeting and the Arab Women Committee session was attended by Ministers and heads of national committees concerned with women's affairs in the Member States as well as relevant regional and international organisations. During the meeting, the Arab Women Committee announced Riyadh as the capital of Arab women for 2020 under the slogan 'Women are a homeland and an ambition'.

The Arab International Women's Forum congratulates the Family Affairs Council and the League of Arab States for its highly successful implementation of this key meeting and looks forward to supporting both organisations in bringing its pivotal recommendations to fruition in the years ahead.



*Distinguished delegates of the Arab Women's Committee Meeting held in Riyadh in February 2020*

## AIWF Global Benefactor Partner PepsiCo: A proud supporter of women's advancement

**Umran Beba, Senior Vice President, Chief Global Diversity and Engagement Officer (CDO) at PepsiCo**

As someone who is passionate about diversity, I am extremely excited about Expo 2020 Dubai. It will be a meeting point for different cultures, innovations, and diverse viewpoints. I love that this universal event has promoted gender equality at all levels, with half of its workforce being women. Since PepsiCo is also the Official Snack and Beverage Partner of Expo 2020, we look forward to being in the center of all this beauty and cultural integration, while representing our products, consumers and the world we live in today.

Sustainability will be a critical topic at Expo 2020, and I cannot wait to see which new solutions will drive progress for the 17 Sustainable Development Goals the world wants to achieve. From zero hunger to quality education, it would be wonderful to see the world change for a better future.

Goal 5 aims to achieve gender equality, and I steadfastly believe that the one thing we can change today for a better tomorrow, is to have equal access for girls and women to education and work opportunities. From advancing basic literacy, to learning code, everything can make a difference. To encourage more young women and girls to enter fields of science, technology, engineering and math, PepsiCo recently introduced the Arab region's first Million Women Mentors chapter.

During much of my career, I was often the only woman in a senior position. It was challenging at times, but through this process of adapting, understanding and adding value, it also inspired my passion to drive an agenda of having more women in the leadership teams. As PepsiCo's Chief Global Diversity and Engagement Officer, I am inspired by the opportunities that exist to take advantage of the balanced perspectives that both men and women provide. PepsiCo believes in promoting a diverse and inclusive workplace, where we can support women's advancement. In Saudi Arabia for example, we work hard to create an environment that is as appealing to Saudi women as it is to Saudi men. One in five of our Saudi Nationals is a woman, and more than 90 women work at our female-only packaging line. To support our female associates who are mothers, we also opened a nursery in our Riyadh office.

In 2019, PepsiCo launched Tamakani, a dedicated platform that will help create opportunities and guidance for women with promising capabilities, scale-up innovative initiatives, and mentor Saudi women to realize their full potential. PepsiCo also partnered with INJAZ Al-Arab to launch our entrepreneurship



*Umran Beba, Senior Vice President, Chief Global Diversity and Engagement Officer (CDO) at PepsiCo*

development program as the next phase of this initiative. Empowering women is a global priority for PepsiCo and PepsiCo Foundation, who plan to invest together USD \$100 million in initiatives that will benefit 12.5 million women and girls by 2025, we are working to help alleviate hunger, responsibly manage water and waste, and support women as champions of nutrition from farm to family. We want to facilitate evolution, innovation and diversity in our industry, and that makes me very optimistic about the future.

## AIWF congratulates HH Princess Haifa Al Mogrin on her appointment as Saudi Permanent Representative to UNESCO



*Princess Haifa bint Abdul Aziz Al Mogrin has been appointed Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia to UNESCO by the United Nations mission in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Photo: Saudi Press Agency (SPA)*

In another momentous first for women in the MENA Region, AIWF congratulates **HRH Princess Haifa bint Abdul Aziz Al Mogrin** on her esteemed appointment in January 2020 as the Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia to UNESCO by the United Nations mission in the Kingdom. The AIWF Chairman Haifa Al Kaylani had the pleasure of meeting Her Highness in Riyadh when Mrs Al Kaylani visited the Kingdom to attend the 3rd Arab China Women's Forum in December 2019. The Board of AIWF and the Chairman have expressed their warmest wishes to Her Highness for all success in this important role which is a true testament to the Saudi Arabian 2030 Vision and a major milestone for the empowerment of Arab women, which will undoubtedly inspire many young future leaders who aspire to leadership in public service throughout the region.



**AIWF ACKNOWLEDGES WITH MUCH APPRECIATION  
THE VALUED SUPPORT OF AIWF GLOBAL & INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS**

**AIWF Global Corporate Benefactor Partner**



**AIWF Global Platinum Partners**



**AIWF Global Diamond Partners**



**AIWF Institutional Partners**



**AIWF Global Communications Partner**



## AIWF Global Partner PwC Middle East receives distinguished Emiratisation Award from HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum



*Hani Ashkar, PwC Senior Territory Partner and AIWF Board Member, receiving the Best Emiratisation Supporting Entity Award from HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum*

The AIWF Board congratulates our valued AIWF Global Partner PwC Middle East on receiving the Best Emiratisation Supporting Entity Award presented by **HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum** in Dubai in February 2020 and received on behalf of PwC Middle East by Senior Territory Partner PwC and AIWF Board Member **Hani Ashkar**.

The Emiratisation Award is an annual award granted by the Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratisation to honour the Emiratisation pioneers in the private sector in order to stimulate and encourage the private sector and the Emiratis working in the sector to support the UAE Vision 2021 aimed at achieving an Emirati-centred knowledge economy and to achieve effective participation of Emiratis in the UAE labour market. The Award consists of the following categories: The Establishments category, Best Emiratisation Supporting Entity category, Emiratisation Pioneer category and Best Emirati Employee category.

AIWF is proud to have the valued support of PwC as a longstanding AIWF Global Partner and commends the PwC Middle East leadership team for its dedication to empowering women executives, supporting diversity, and driving inclusion in the workplace in the region and beyond.

AIWF and PwC are committed to nurturing the next generation of women business leaders, innovators and entrepreneurs, helping to empower them as they break new ground in business and in public life. PwC has supported AIWF in the Young Arab Women Leaders conference initiative since it was launched in 2011, as well as on a number of other key empowerment initiatives including, most recently, the major AIWF conference held at the American University in Cairo in September 2019 on Women as Engines of Economic Growth and the high-level conference of AIWF in partnership with the University of Massachusetts

Medical School and the American University of Beirut, Women Leaders & Health: Empowering women leaders in innovation, medical education and healthcare delivery.

## PwC leading in diversity and inclusion in the MENA workplace

**Zina Janabi, Director – Middle East Consulting, Middle East Women in Business Leader, PwC Middle East**

Last year, PwC released the *Women in Work: Insight into MENA* report as a means to better understand the female perspective of professional women in Saudi Arabia, UAE and Egypt. PwC identified the cost of legal and social barriers preventing women from accessing jobs and careers in the region is an estimated \$575 billion a year, according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

The PwC report identifies four suggested actions to achieve lasting change and improve the lives and career paths for women and business economics for everyone. These are: Raising awareness and transparency; Flexible working; Applying a data-driven approach; and Accountability.

At PwC Middle East the diversity and inclusion journey started with a heavy focus on awareness and educating people on the importance of diversity and inclusion and the value this brings to the firm, communities and individuals. This approach continues and will always be at the core of PwC's strategy. Flexible working should be embedded in all organisations, and offers benefits for male and female employees. While this is important for women returning to work after maternity leave, it is particularly important for the new generation of employees that are joining the workforce.

Companies should also consider reviewing their paternity leave policies; having paternity leave policies closely aligned with maternity leave ensures companies are setting a level playing field for both genders. These policies could also be extended to help new or former employees who for personal reasons have been out of the labour market for many years, re-join successfully.

Accountability is needed. Organisations should appoint someone within the leadership team to be accountable for driving the diversity and inclusion agenda and ensure this responsibility cascades down through all tiers of the business. Accountability however should sit at each level of the organisations. It should be embedded in the culture.

## AIWF congratulates the World Bank Group and Partners on the launch of a new initiative to expand access to finance for MSMEs, driving growth and jobs in MENA

AIWF congratulates its longstanding partners at the World Bank Group which, in partnership with the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Sweden, and Switzerland, is launching a new, expanded phase of an advisory program to help improve access to finance for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), promote sustainable job creation, and boost private sector-led economic growth across the Middle East and North Africa.

MSMEs are the backbone of MENA economies, comprising nearly 90 percent of private firms and playing a pivotal role in the creation of dynamic, competitive and inclusive economies and jobs. But their ability to grow has been severely limited, largely by restricted access to finance. As a result, MSMEs in MENA have among the lowest levels of usage of bank loans in the world.

The five-year advisory program, implemented by the World Bank and IFC through targeted regional advisory projects as well as country-focused initiatives is aimed at energizing the MSME sector in Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia, and the West Bank and Gaza. The program takes a 360-degree approach in improving MSME's access to finance. This involves enhancing the enabling environment, developing financial market infrastructure, and building the technical and funding capacity of financial intermediaries. The program particularly focuses on supporting women entrepreneurs and leveraging digital technology to enhance financial inclusion.

"A robust MSME sector can generate jobs, economic opportunities for women, innovation, and channel youth energies productively. We are committed to helping economies in the Middle East and North Africa in their efforts to promote access to digital financial services by entrepreneurs," said **Ceyla Pazarbasioglu**, World Bank Group Vice President for Equitable Growth, Finance and Institutions (EFI). **Sérgio Pimenta**, IFC Vice President for the Middle East and Africa, said: "A vibrant private sector, underpinned by strong MSMEs and forward-looking entrepreneurs, is vital for sustainable, long-term growth in MENA. We will work together with our development partners across the region to stimulate private sector development and help enhance financial sector sustainability and stability."

AIWF has long championed the role of MSMEs in the MENA Region and looks forward to supporting the World Bank in this valuable initiative.

## AIWF participates at the First Joint ESCWA-UNCTAD-OECD Competition Forum in January 2020 in Beirut



*The First Joint ESCWA-UNCTAD-OECD Competition Forum for the Arab Region was held 23 – 24 January 2020 at UN House in Beirut and was attended by AIWF Board Member Hanan Saab*

AIWF was proud to be represented by valued Board Member **Hanan Saab** at the First Joint ESCWA-UNCTAD-OECD Competition Forum for the Arab Region, held on 23 – 24 January 2020 at the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia in Beirut, Lebanon. AIWF was also invited to nominate key speakers for this landmark initiative, for which UNESCWA, UNCTAD and the OECD joined forces to help strengthen competition law and policy across the Arab region and inaugurated their new co-operation agreement with the organisation of this Forum in Beirut, Lebanon at UN House.

For the Competition Forum the Opening Session was led by **Rola Dashti**, Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), and the programme featured three key sessions covering competition and economic development, effective competition frameworks, private sector development through competition law and policy, and competition and public procurement. Plenary topics addressed included fighting bid rigging in public procurement, and breakout sessions examined competition as it relates to employment, gender and good governance.

Competition, competition policy and consumer protection play a key role for sustainable development and the achievement of the Agenda 2030. Competition creates dynamic business environments, encourages innovation, as well as investment and offers better goods at lower prices, thus enhancing productivity and consumer welfare. Thus, the 1st Competition Forum for the Arab region discussed how competition can make invaluable contributions to SDG 5 (gender equality), SDG 8 (employment), SDG 10 (reducing inequalities) and SDG 16 (effective institutions). For example, Session 4 on 'Competition



and Public Procurement’ was a reminder to think about an “entrepreneurial state” that assumes the responsibility for sustainable and inclusive public investments by driving not just facilitating innovation in partnership with the private sector. Session 2 on ‘Effective Competition Frameworks’ focused on institutional arrangements, legal conditions and efficient organisational structures that afford independence, transparency and credibility.

Drawing on the unique expertise of the three organisations, the Forum aims to become an annual knowledge-sharing platform on competition policy and enforcement for the Arab region bringing together high-level competition officials, policymakers, regulators, and the broader competition community. Stakeholders can use the Forum to promote peer learning and dialogue, consensus building and networking.

AIWF is proud to support ESCWA in its vital initiatives for women and social development in the region and also has a long history of co-operation with the OECD and especially the OECD-MENA Investment Programme on regional and global outreach on matters of mutual concern, including economic empowerment for women and youth.

## AIWF Board Member Mona Al Moayyed featured in Forbes Middle East’s 100 Power Businesswomen List



*AIWF Board Member Mona Al Moayyed was featured in the Forbes Middle East 100 Power Businesswomen List*

The Chairman of AIWF Haifa Al Kaylani has congratulated **HE Mona Al Moayyed**, valued AIWF Board Member, Member of the Bahrain Shura Council and Managing Director YK Al Moayyed & Sons, to share the warmest congratulations of the Board on her much-deserved inclusion in Forbes Middle East’s 100 Power Businesswomen List.

AIWF has extended its warm congratulations to all women leaders featured in this listing which will undoubtedly inspire many young future leaders who aspire to leadership in business in the MENA Region and globally, including **Raja Al Gurg**,

Managing Director, Easa Saleh Al Gurg Group, UAE; **Lubna Olayan**, Chairperson, SABB, Saudi Arabia; **Heike Harmgart**, Managing Director Southern & Eastern Mediterranean Region, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Germany; **Randa Sadik**, Deputy CEO, Arab Bank, Jordan; **Majida Rashid**, CEO, Real Estate Investment Management, Dubai Land Department, UAE; **Hind Bahwan**, Founder and Chairperson, Bahwan CyberTek Group, Oman; **Lujaina Mohsin Darwish**, Joint Deputy Chairperson, Mohsin Haider Darwish LLC, Oman; **Caroline Fattal**, Senior Vice President & Board Member, Fattal Group, Lebanon; **Leila Hoteit**, Senior Partner & Managing Director, Boston Consulting Group, Lebanon; **Miriam Bensalah Chaqroun**, CEO & Director, Les Eaux Minérales d’Oulmes; Holmarcom Group, Morocco; **Sharifa Al Harthy**, Vice Chairperson, MB Holding, Oman; and **Mona Bawarshi**, CEO, Gezairi Transport, Lebanon.

AIWF looks forward to working closely with all women leaders in the AIWF network towards our shared mission for women’s advancement in the MENA region and internationally.

## AIWF congratulates valued Board Member Dr Afnan Al Shuaiby on important recognition in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



*Dr Afnan Al Shuaiby, AIWF Board Member, former Secretary General & CEO of the Arab British Chamber of Commerce in London, and current Director General International Relations at the Saudi Arabia Ministry of Culture*

The Board of AIWF congratulates fellow Board Member Dr Afnan Al Shuaiby for her recent recognition on International Women’s Day in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as one of eight Saudi women leaders awarded for making an impact on the international stage.

Dr Al Shuaiby was the former Secretary General and CEO of the Arab British Chamber of Commerce based in London for three terms. She has over 20 years of comprehensive large-scale management experience and a successful track record in Saudi Arabia, the wider Arab world, the United Kingdom and the United States. She has also recently been appointed as a

member of the Executive Committee of the B20, the private sector's voice of the G20 community.

AIWF congratulates Dr Al Shuaiby on this richly deserved award and is proud to have her expertise and contributions to AIWF as a valued Board Member.

## AIWF congratulates Board Member & Co-Chair Sana Bardawil on the completion of her Masters Degree

AIWF extends its warmest congratulations to **Sana Bardawil**, AIWF Co-Chair and former Regional Communications Director, MENA, Upstream International at AIWF Global Partner Shell, who has recently completed her Masters Degree in Book and Digital Media Studies from Leiden University. Sana, who is based in The Hague area in the Netherlands, is an experienced communications and corporate affairs professional who also has a Master of Philosophy (MPhil) in Modern Middle East Studies from St Antony's College, University of Oxford, and a BA in Political Science from the American University of Beirut. AIWF is proud to have Sana as Co-Chair and as a longstanding and highly valued Board Member, and wishes Sana well on all her much-deserved success.

## AIWF Board congratulates Saada Hammad, former Regional Director at Memac Ogilvy, on her retirement



*Saada Hammad, former Regional Director for Ogilvy PR& Influence, AIWF Chairman Haifa Al Kaylani, Mr Edmond Moutran, Chairman & CEO of Memac Ogilvy, and Mrs Liliane Moutran at the signing of the AIWF / Memac Ogilvy Memorandum of Understanding at the Memac offices in Beirut*

The AIWF Board bids a very fond farewell to **Saada Hammad**, who has recently retired after ten excellent years at Memac Ogilvy, AIWF's valued Global Communications Partner, as Regional Director for Ogilvy PR & Influence in MENA. Saada has long overseen the exceptional Memac Ogilvy teams in Beirut, Cairo, Amman, Riyadh and Dubai who have all worked so diligently with the AIWF team over the years to secure full coverage of all our events and initiatives in the pan-Arab press and television media. AIWF wishes Saada all happiness and success in all

she opts to pursue in her retirement. In addition, we look forward to strengthening the AIWF / Memac Ogilvy partnership with **Ashraf Shakah** in Memac's Riyadh operations who will be expanding his current remit to include regional leadership of Memac Ogilvy PR & Influence.

## AIWF Global Partner Boodle Hatfield wins Exceptional Achievement Award



*AIWF Global Partner Boodle Hatfield was awarded the Managing Partners Forum Award for 'Exceptional Achievement by a Firm' on 03 March 2020 in London, which was received by Sara Maccallum, Senior Partner of Boodle Hatfield*

AIWF Global Partner Boodle Hatfield law firm was proud and honoured to be awarded the Managing Partners Forum Award for 'Exceptional Achievement by a Firm' on 03 March 2020 at the London Marriott Hotel. **Sara Maccallum**, Senior Partner, who received the award at the gala evening, was commended for the way in which the firm has retained a clear focus on its core client base throughout its 300-year history and has carved out a strong niche as the 'go to' firm for advising high net worth clients from around the globe on their personal, business and property needs. The firm's distinctive female leadership, long-standing culture of gender equality and strong management team has evolved the traditional values into a business strategy which has enabled the firm to thrive in today's world.

The Managing Partners Forum Awards, now in their 18th year, shine a spotlight on the vital contribution of leaders and management experts in professional firms, to the strategy and smooth operation of the business and its clients. Sara commented that "we were delighted to win such a prestigious award. I am very proud of all the team at Boodle Hatfield who work together to make the firm a great place to work and to ensure that our clients get the best service."

On the following evening **Kyra Motley**, one of the firm's Middle Eastern partners, was awarded the Citywealth Leaders List Client Rating for Law award at the Citywealth Power Women Awards. This special award was given based on the outstanding feedback that Kyra has received from clients during the last



year who comment that she is "clear, concise and professional at all times, with tremendous energy, focus and commitment to her clients".

These two awards in March were the culmination of a very successful year for Boodle Hatfield and its Middle East team. Last year **Salpy Kouyoumjian** was the proud recipient of the Citywealth PowerWomen of the year Gold Award, **Shaima Jillood** won the Silver Award for Future leaders and **Reem Al-Jumaily** became the fourth Middle Eastern partner at Boodle Hatfield when she was made a partner at Boodle Hatfield in May 2019.

Boodle Hatfield is a London law firm who offer a full service to Middle Eastern clients, with Arabic speakers across our core practice areas, from establishing businesses in the UK to helping them structure and finance their international and private business assets. Boodle Hatfield has been a Global Partner of the AIWF for the last three years and is a strong supporter of its work in the MENA Region. AIWF has been proud to partner with Boodle Hatfield since 2017 and acknowledges its unique achievements in setting a new standard for diversity and inclusion for women in law and the professions.

## AIWF congratulates Harvard ALI Leader Rosabeth Moss Kanter on the publication of her book, *Think Outside the Building: How Advanced Leaders Can Change the World One Smart Innovation at a Time*

Over a decade ago, renowned innovation expert **Rosabeth Moss Kanter** co-founded and then directed Harvard's Advanced Leadership Initiative, which AIWF Chairman **Haifa Al Kaylani** was proud to undertake as a year-long Fellowship in 2017. Rosabeth's breakthrough work with hundreds of successful professionals and executives, as well as aspiring young entrepreneurs, identifies the leadership paradigm of the future: the ability to "think outside the building" to overcome establishment paralysis and produce significant innovation for a better world.

"Thinking inside the building", or using the authority of position, can work in corporate settings, but not when you have to work with, through, or around people with independent power bases, and within challenging cultural and political situations. Kanter's insight into advanced leadership is an important and original contribution, one that transcends conventional practice.



*Rosabeth Moss Kanter presenting the Harvard ALI Certificate to AIWF Chairman Haifa Al Kaylani in December 2017 upon the completion of Mrs Al Kaylani's year-long Harvard Fellowship*

The book illustrates how purpose-driven people united in their conviction that positive change is possible can have real impact on some of today's biggest problems, from climate change to gun safety to inequality to racial issues. Kanter provides candid narrative accounts of their successes and near-stumbles. A former Trader Joe's executive, for example, navigated across business, government, and community sectors to deal with poor nutrition in inner cities while reducing food waste. A concerned European banker used the power of persuasion, not position, to find novel financing for improving the health of the oceans. A Washington couple enticed global partners to join an Uber-like platform to match skilled refugees with talent-hungry companies. A visionary journalist-turned-entrepreneur closed social divides by giving fifty million social media users access to free local education and culture.

In the book, Kanter explains why big, intractable social problems require advanced leadership; how to find leaders, train, and motivate them to tackle major problems; how to recognize the seven perverse traps of career success, and move beyond them; the work of "thinking outside the building": awakening your purpose and passion for social change, noticing gaps that can be filled by new approaches, taking random walks and far afield trips; advanced leadership lessons, such as how to tell inspiring stories, how to identify the right allies, and how to influence without authority and lead through persuasion; the power of persistence: readying oneself for the "messy, muddled, miserable middle" of change; and how to scale up your work, including by joining forces with other advanced leaders.

This ambitious book aims not only to change the way we look at our careers and leadership potential, but to mobilize an "army for change" equipped to tackle the world's most pressing and salient problems. Of the book, **Indra Nooyi**, former chairman and CEO of PepsiCo, said: "Kanter's book lays out the next big step in innovation: the bold leadership to imagine new solutions to big problems of communities and the world. Her brilliant new book is a compelling read, full of fascinating stories and breakthrough ideas."



## AIWF Institutional Partner The Pearl Initiative Hosts 'Transparency for Impact in Philanthropy' in Abu Dhabi



*The Pearl Initiative in the UAE organised a roundtable on 'Transparency for Impact in Philanthropy' in Abu Dhabi*

The Pearl Initiative, a business-led non-profit organisation promoting corporate accountability in the Gulf Region's private sector, and Sandooq Al Watan, a private sector led social initiative that promotes the inclusive socio-economic growth of the UAE, convened over 100 high-level business and philanthropy leaders from across the Gulf Region to discuss how transparency can improve the impact of philanthropic capital. The discussion focused on challenges and opportunities in implementing higher standards of transparency, data collection and impact evaluation across the Gulf Region's philanthropic sector.

Titled 'Transparency for Impact in Philanthropy', the panel discussion, which took place at the Emirates Palace in Abu Dhabi, engaged participants in discussions around how the sharing of lessons learned, as well as financial disclosure can build institutional learning, help professionalise the sector and encourage collaboration and co-funding to build high impact scalable initiatives. **Badr Jafar**, Co-Founder of the Pearl Initiative, opened the session by stating that "Philanthropy is private capital for public good and for this reason the Pearl Initiative created the Governance in Philanthropy programme to help individuals and organisations be more strategic and impactful in "the disbursement of their philanthropic capital." Philanthropy has an important and rapidly growing role in contributing to global and regional development, as highlighted by the keynote speaker, **Michael Green**, Chief Executive Officer of the Social Progress Imperative.

The discussion brought together regional philanthropists and experts in philanthropy to give local examples of how transparency can drive effective philanthropy and the ongoing barriers that prevent this. They comprised: **Muna Al Gurg**, Director of Retail, Easa Saleh Al Gurg Group; **Mohamed Al Qadi**, Director General, Sandooq Al Watan; **Dr Natasha Matic**, Deputy CEO and Chief Strategy Officer, King Khalid

Foundation; and **Sheikh Khalid Al Massan**, CEO, Oman LNG Development Foundation. **Clare Woodcraft**, former CEO of Emirates Foundation, moderated the discussions.

**Yasmine Omari**, Executive Director of the Pearl Initiative, said: "Philanthropy has been embedded within the economic, social and cultural fabric of the Gulf Region for centuries. What we are seeing now though is very significant growth in institutional giving which in turn requires a new level of governance. As revealed by our own research, the single-most important requirement of 90 percent of donors in the region when they associate their philanthropy with an organisation, is that the latter be transparent." The event was held as part of the Pearl Initiative's Governance in Philanthropy programme, launched in 2017 with the aim of enhancing the effectiveness of the sector across the Gulf Region through improved governance, accountability and transparency. The programme has been developed to support individual and institutional donors striving to be more strategic and impactful in their giving. Through community engagement and research, it promotes improved governance standards in the Gulf Region's philanthropic ecosystem.

Founded in 2010, the Pearl Initiative is a Gulf business-led non-profit organisation promoting a corporate culture of accountability and transparency as key drivers of competitiveness and sustainable economic growth across the Gulf Region. The organisation develops programmes and publishes regional research reports and case studies to promote the implementation of higher standards of corporate governance amongst business and student communities across the Gulf Region. AIWF is proud to have the Pearl Initiative as a valued Institutional Partner and looks forward to collaborating ever more closely with their outstanding team to enhance governance standards in the region and especially on supporting a greater role for more women on corporate boards in the Arab world.

## AIWF congratulates Helena Samaha on her appointment as President of Lex Mundi

AIWF warmly congratulates longstanding friend and supporter **Helena Samaha**, President of Lex Mundi, who in January 2020 was named to the Hot 100 List, published by The Lawyer. The Lawyer Hot 100 List recognizes the most daring, innovative and creative lawyers from in-house, private practice and the Bar. Nominations come from across the legal profession. As the only leader of a legal network included on the list, Samaha has been recognized for helping to shape the legal profession now and into the future.



*Helena Samaha, President of Lex Mundi*

Samaha started her new role in June 2019, becoming the first woman president in Lex Mundi's history. In 2020, her strategy centers around revamping the services that Lex Mundi provides its members with a client-centric focus and agenda. She will concentrate on ways of improving the retention of legal talent, supporting members in their business and client development, and modernizing both Lex Mundi and its members' technology and innovation strategies. She would also like to incorporate more firms from North Africa and the Middle East into Lex Mundi's membership.

Having worked at Clifford Chance and DLA Piper, as well as in-house as GC at Virgin and Liberty Global in the UK, AlixPartners in Paris and Orbit Showtime Network in Dubai, Samaha is in a unique position to improve the global legal market through Lex Mundi's 160 firms. The AIWF Board and members in the London and MENA legal community wish Helena Samaha the very best in her new role.

## AIWF nominee Lina Abojaradeh from Jordan selected for Schwarzman Scholars

In 2019 AIWF was invited to support Schwarzman Scholars with their selection process for the fifth cohort and enlisted the support of Injaz in Jordan to identify talented candidates for this prestigious international scholarship programme. Over 4,700 candidates applied from all around the world, leaving the team with the very difficult task of selecting just 147 to be Schwarzman Scholars.

The Schwarzman Scholarship is designed to prepare young leaders to deepen understanding between China and the rest of the world, and is the first scholarship created to respond to the geopolitical landscape of the 21st Century.

One of the candidates nominated by AIWF and Injaz, **Lina Abojaradeh**, was successful and has now joined the Schwarzman Scholars programme. Lina identifies as a pioneer of "artivism", activism through art. Founder of social initiative Archismile, she is using art as a teaching methodology to empower youth in Jordan to gain 21st century skills, having

impacted over 7000 youth. She is alumni of multiple international fellowships for civic leaders, and winner of international awards in filmmaking, writing and art. Her art raises awareness on issues like colonialism, gender, religious and racial inequality. Lina, who is from Jordan, has exhibited and spoken about her work in Ireland, Argentina, Turkey, the United States, Tunisia, and Egypt.



*Lina Abojaradeh, Schwarzman Scholar*

**Wyatt Bruton**, Associate Director of Admissions for Schwarzman Scholars, shared: "We are absolutely delighted to welcome Lina Abojaradeh to this new class of Schwarzman Scholars. I so enjoyed meeting her during her interview in London, and I look forward to supporting her on this journey."

AIWF wishes Lina every success in her scholarship and remains committed in 2020 to building new bridges and opening up new opportunities for our talented youth in the region.



**ARAB INTERNATIONAL  
WOMEN'S FORUM**

المنتدى العربي الدولي للمرأة

For more information on AIWF's history, mission, programmes and publications, or to join AIWF as an individual, corporate or student / new graduate member, please visit [www.aiwfonline.com](http://www.aiwfonline.com)

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## Date of next issue

The next edition of the AIWF Newsletter will be published in July 2020. AIWF Global Partners, members, friends and supporters are kindly requested to contact the Editor at [info@aiwfonline.com](mailto:info@aiwfonline.com) on or before 15 June 2020 to contribute articles, photos and news.