



AIWF NEWS

Arab International Women's Forum

المنتدى العربي الدولي للمرأة

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CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

As we commence our 2013 AIWF activities, as Chairman and on behalf of the Board of the Arab International Women's Forum, I would like to extend to all of our valued members, global partners and friends, success, happiness and peace in the year ahead.

It gives me great pleasure at the opening of my message to announce the appointment of a new Board of Directors of the Arab International Women's Forum. Distinguished members of the Board are all men and women leaders at the highest level of business, finance, international institutions, academia, government, chambers of trade, public life and civil society. The AIWF new Board of Directors reflects a wide representation of Arab and international countries contributing a wealth of knowledge and experience to the governance, direction and vision of AIWF and to the promotion of AIWF objectives for the next decade. The first formal meeting of the Board took place in Dubai on 9 December 2012.

The full listing of the esteemed Board Directors is included in this Newsletter.

I take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks to the members of the founder Board of Trustees appointed in 2001 whose constant input and hard work has enabled AIWF to reach its current status of being recognised in the Arab world and internationally as a powerful advocate for women in business and their empowerment.

AIWF's programme in 2012 focused on promoting the empowerment of women and youth to act as future agents for lasting, sustainable development and prosperity in the Arab world.

The highlight of the programme was the May 2012 Sharjah conference entitled *Emerging Economies, Emerging Leaderships: Arab Women and Youth as Drivers of Change*, held from 15 -17 May at one of the leading universities and centres of excellence in the Arab world, The American University of Sharjah, under the esteemed patronage of His Highness, Sheikh Dr Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qassimi, Supreme Council Member, United Arab Emirates, Ruler of Sharjah and Founder and President of the American University of Sharjah.

AIWF was able at this important conference to reinforce its long-held belief that in order for the Arab world to enter into a new era of equality, it must mobilise all its resources – women and youth included – to achieve its full potential.

Our conference identified and promoted factors which will create real opportunities and economic growth and provide a better future for women and youth.

The Young Arab Women Leaders: The Voice of the Future initiative in partnership with AIWF Global Partner, PwC, was also a very important and key part of the AIWF

I have pleasure in announcing the new Directors of the Arab International Women's Forum as follows:

Mrs Haifa Al Kaylani

Founder Chairman, Arab International Women's Forum

Mr Saad Abdul Latif

CEO, Asia, Middle East and Africa Division (AMEA), PepsiCo

Mrs Raja Al Gurg

Managing Director, Easa Saleh Al Gurg Group

Dr Shaikha Al Maskari

Chairperson, Al Maskari Holding, Chairperson, Tricon Group

Dr Afnan Al-Shuaiby

Secretary General & CEO, Arab British Chamber of Commerce

Ms Mona Almoayyed

Managing Director, Y K Almoayyed & Sons

Mr David Arkless

Founder & Chairman, Arklight Consulting, Former Global President, Corporate & Government Affairs, ManpowerGroup

Ms Sana Bardawil

Communications Director, Shell EP International Ltd

Mrs Nadereh Chamblou

Senior Advisor to the Chief Economist for the MENA Region, The World Bank

Mrs Chiara Corazza

Managing Director, Greater Paris Investment Agency

Ms Roxanne Decyk

Non Executive Director, Petrofac

Ms Haruko Fukuda, OBE

Non Executive Director, Investec PLC

Mr Warwick Hunt, MNZM

Managing Partner, Middle East Region, PwC LLP

Mrs Sung-Joo Kim

Chairperson & CEO, MCM Holding AG / Sungjoo Group

Ms Raghda Kurdi

Vice President, Hayat Pharmaceutical Industries

Ms Mei Sim Lai OBE DL

Principal, LaiPeters & Co

Mr Guy Lallemand

Regional President, Africa & Middle East, Pfizer Inc

Professor Jean Pierre Lehmann

Founding Director, Evian Group

Mr Robert Lyle

Director, Commonwealth Disaster Management Agency (CDMA)

Mrs Sylvia Perry

Finance Director, Arab International Women's Forum

Mrs Hanan Akram Saab

Founder, Co-Owner and Managing Director, Pharmamed

Ms Niki Tzavela

Member of the European Parliament

Continued

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

programme through three outstanding conferences in 2012, the first in Amman, Jordan on 26 June, the second in Beirut, Lebanon on 20 September and the third in Dubai, United Arab Emirates on 10 December. All these highly successful events respectively featured inspirational speakers and participants.

The Dubai Chamber of Commerce, Dubai, UAE was the venue for the third in the series of conferences on young Arab women leaders held in cooperation with and hosted by the Dubai Business Women Council. This important conference provided a unique opportunity particularly for Arab women leaders in Dubai and the United Arab Emirates to network with eminent guest speakers and, in particular, showcased the talent and energy of potential young Emirati women leaders. A full report on the Dubai conference is included in this issue of AIWF News.

The joint mission of AIWF and PwC in organising this ongoing regional initiative is to identify and build an inspirational network of young Arab business and professional women, all marked for future positions of increased responsibility within their companies, organisations and communities.

It was a great pleasure to have such a good representation of AIWF Global Partners at all three of these conferences taking part in what had been planned from the beginning as a partnership initiative and the attendance of Partners' delegates was much appreciated and added greatly to the success of the events.

Excellent media coverage was provided throughout by Memac Ogilvy, AIWF Global Communications Partner.

The **Young Arab Women Leaders** initiative aimed at assisting young women in the region to optimise and strengthen their personal, networking and business skills, and thus their long-lasting contributions to their economies and communities at large will continue throughout 2013 when conferences are planned for more countries in the region. The first of this series will be in May 2013 at Birzeit University, Birzeit, Palestine in partnership with PricewaterhouseCoopers when AIWF and PwC will continue their commitment to nurture the next generation of women leaders in Palestine, helping to empower them as they break new ground in business and in public life.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all AIWF Global Partners who supported our total programme of activities throughout the year.

Reporting on my activities as Chairman of AIWF for the last quarter of 2012, on 12 November, in my role as Director of the EastWest Institute, a global think-and-do tank that focuses on the most pressing challenges facing global peace and security and forges collective action for a safer and better world, I attended the ***Reshaping Economic Security in Southwest Asia and the Middle East*** Conference in Brussels. This conference brought together close to 300 high-level policy makers, business and investment executives and public opinion leaders from all over the world to brainstorm on the theme of economic security, with a particular focus on energy-water-food. It was a great honour to chair the Session entitled ***New Directions for Water-Energy-Food Security Policies in Southwest Asia and the Middle East***, subjects of

key importance to the whole region which were most expertly addressed by the distinguished panellists.

The World NGO Day is an international calendar day held on the 18th of November every year to Celebrate, Commemorate and Connect NGOs and NPOs around the world. As Chairman of AIWF, I attended the World NGO Day Summit held in London on 18 November 2012 and gave a keynote address explaining how AIWF as an NGO has been very effective and how it has interacted with civil society, governments, media, multi-national companies and academia to deliver its message to impact change in the region and support a greater role for women as engines of economic growth through its initiatives and conferences.

On 21 November, I had great pleasure in welcoming members and friends to the AIWF Autumn Get Together which was kindly hosted by AIWF Global Partner, DLA Piper, in their London offices.

After the Dubai ***Young Women Leaders*** Conference on 10 December, AIWF was given a great opportunity to have a private screening of an award winning film '*Rafeaa: Solar Mama*', a film dedicated to women's empowerment based on a true story about a Bedouin woman living with her daughters in one of Jordan's poorest desert villages on the Iraqi border and the challenges she faces resulting from a major opportunity to be trained as a solar engineer.

In maintaining the tradition of having an annual meeting with our Partners, a Global Partners Meeting was held in Dubai in December followed by a Benefactor's Meeting with AIWF Global Corporate Benefactor Partner, PepsiCo. These annual meetings provide an opportunity for discussing shared initiatives and current and future strategies.

On 6 February, I was delighted to participate as Keynote Speaker in a one-day workshop entitled '***Presence and Persuasion***', aimed at providing young women with enhanced communication skills so that they can promote themselves within their own social and cultural boundaries. As Chairman of AIWF, I was pleased to give an overview of the progress and pitfalls regarding women's empowerment in the Arab world.

It was a great pleasure and honour for me to attend the Wharton MENA Business Conference 2013, an independent, student-run conference organised by the Middle East North Africa (MENA) Club and the Arab and Middle Eastern student body at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. The conference entitled "***Economies of Freedom: Reshaping the Future of the MENA Region***" shed light on the positive social and economic changes taking place in the region today while uncertainty lingers over the political landscape. Guest speakers included business executives, policy makers, ambassadors, foreign affairs experts and global scholars, who engaged in dialogue about the MENA region's most pressing issues. I was delighted to participate as a keynote panellist on the subject of ***Economic Inclusion: Opportunities for Women in the MENA Region*** at this conference and I enjoyed meeting the outstanding and inspiring group of undergraduate and MBA students at The Wharton School of The University of Pennsylvania.

In February, I was pleased as a Member of the Selection

Committee, to attend a meeting at the EMA Arab German Mentoring Project held in Hamburg, under the umbrella of the Euro-Mediterranean Association for Cooperation and Development. This project aims to promote the economic and societal participation of women in Tunisia. The project's objective will be fulfilled through sustainable economic empowerment, facilitating the local, regional and international networking of women, the enhancement of *soft and hard skills*, the enhanced visibility of women, especially business women, in the media. At the heart of this project is a German-Arab Mentoring Programme, in which 30 participants work in mentor-protégée tandems tasked with implementing a sustainable business idea. Members of the Selection Committee will elect participants and nominate winners for this programme.

The Women's Cultural & Social Society (WCSS), the first women's society to be established in Kuwait, celebrates its 50th anniversary in March. It was founded in 1963 by a group of Kuwaiti women who were among the first to graduate from universities and higher education institutes. The Society's main objective is to develop women in all fields, encourage their participation in community activities and increase their awareness of their rights and duties to ensure their effective contribution to such issues. I am looking forward to participating in the Society's special 50th anniversary celebrations and Cultural Forum taking place from 5-7 March, having received an invitation from Mrs Al Nassef, Chair of the Board of Directors, the Women's Cultural & Social Society in Kuwait.

Following the World Trade Agenda Summit to be held on 22 April this year in Qatar, ICC WCF (International Chamber of Commerce World Chambers Federation), in partnership with the Qatar Chamber of Commerce, will be holding its 8th World Chambers Congress, the only global forum for chamber of commerce leaders to share experiences and best practices on their operations. Its plenary sessions will address the role of chambers and their businesses in local matters including education and business, job creation, women in business, developing young entrepreneurship, and their role in supporting SMEs in the global economy. I am pleased, as Chairman of

AIWF, to participate as a Keynote Guest Speaker in the plenary session entitled ***"Women in Business"*** to be held on 24 April.

AIWF has, since its inception, given opportunities to young students and volunteers to work in its offices in London to gain experience of working with an international NGO. In this context, I am pleased to welcome to AIWF Reema Al Juffali, a Saudi Arabian national, an undergraduate on a BA degree in International Affairs at Boston University, Massachusetts, USA. Reema is on secondment with AIWF as an volunteer gaining experience and knowledge of AIWF as a not for profit development organisation as outreach from her degree course and in preparation for her return to Saudi Arabia to work in the voluntary sector in youth education and helping to build civil society.

It was a great honour for me to receive the ***Muslim Women of the Year Award*** for 2013 in the United Kingdom at the official ceremony held in Manchester on 29 January 2013 on the occasion of the inaugural British Muslim Awards for 2013, initiated by the Islamic Bank of Britain and attended by close to 500 men and women leaders from the British Muslim Community. This award was in recognition of my voluntary work extending over 28 years in promoting the role of women and creating cross-cultural understanding and dialogue in the UK, the Arab world and internationally.

In 2013, AIWF's key message remains the same, ie that job creation, education and capacity building are of critical importance, not just for the future of the Arab region but for all emerging economies throughout the world. Empowering youth is paramount in order to build a strong, viable and educated Arab middle class. AIWF's focus and emphasis on Young Arab Women Leaders will continue for the foreseeable future.

Haifa Al Kaylani

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

AIWF CHAIRMAN RECOGNISED AS THE UK MUSLIM WOMAN OF THE YEAR 2013

The Arab International Women's Forum is proud to announce that Mrs Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani, Founder Chairman of AIWF, has received the Muslim Women of the Year Award for 2013 in the United Kingdom.

The award was presented to Mrs Al Kaylani at an official ceremony held in Manchester on Tuesday 29 January 2013 on the occasion of the inaugural British Muslim Awards for 2013, initiated by the Islamic Bank of Britain and attended by approximately 500 men and women leaders from the British Muslim community.

The event honoured the success and achievements of Britain's Muslim individuals, groups and business people, and highlighted the significant role Muslims play in contributing to a better Great Britain.

The Muslim Woman of the Year Award is a recognition of Mrs Al Kaylani's voluntary work extending over 28 years in promoting the role of women and creating cross-cultural understanding and dialogue in the UK, the Arab world and the international community.



Left to Right Shahid Malik of the World Congress of Muslim Philanthropists presenting an Award to Haifa Al Kaylani.

REPORT OF CONFERENCE ENTITLED
YOUNG ARAB WOMEN LEADERS - THE VOICE OF THE FUTURE
HELD AT THE DUBAI CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY, DUBAI ON 10 DECEMBER 2012



*Left to right in centre **Mr Warwick Hunt**, Managing Partner, Middle East PwC, **Mrs Haifa Al Kaylani**, Chairman, AIWF, **Mrs Faiza Al Sayed**, Vice President, Dubai Business Women Council with the members of the PwC team*

The Arab International Women's Forum (AIWF) held a conference on 10 December 2012, as part of its initiative in partnership with PwC entitled **Young Arab Women Leaders - The Voice of the Future** in Dubai, UAE in cooperation with and hosted by the Dubai Business Women's Council. As the third of a series of events planned for the year and beyond, the conference, held at the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry, aimed to assist a wide spectrum of young women leaders in and across the region to further optimise and strengthen their personal business skills and overall contribution to the business world and community at large.

Designed to assist young women leaders in understanding the role of gender equality in shaping political, economic and social opportunities available to women in the Arab world, the conference's main objective was to provide the ideal opportunity for participants to gain key insights into best practice methods that transform challenges and barriers into success stories and various opportunities for development and enhancement. It also served as a platform for the young aspiring Emirati women to support, engage and network with other women in pioneering political, economic and social leadership roles in the Arab world while learning more about the qualities of leadership for women in the 21st century.

The Conference was jointly moderated by **Ms Eithne Treanor, Founder & Managing Director of ETreanor Media** for the morning session and **Ms Sana Bardawil, Communications Director, Shell EP International Ltd** for the afternoon session.

In opening the forum, **Mrs Haifa Al Kaylani, Founder Chairman of AIWF** said *"At AIWF, we are always looking for new approaches to the youth unemployment challenge and we believe that these include incentivising young people to develop marketable skills and educators to emphasise skills development whilst encouraging private sector firms to recruit and develop Arab graduates so we have an employed, educated youth. AIWF clearly sees job creation as the crisis of our time, and for this reason we are heavily investing in the success of the Young Arab Women Leaders initiative, and are very focused on empowering youth in emerging economies to become entrepreneurs and job creators which, we believe,*

is key to building a strong, viable and educated Arab middle class."

Mrs Al Kaylani added: *"AIWF wholeheartedly shares and supports the UAE government's strategic vision for women and youth because it is based on providing them with the necessary tools to achieve academic and professional excellence. This strategy has energised women's role in public service as well as the private sector, and the commitment and enthusiasm from Emirati women themselves to benefit from these unprecedented opportunities has moved gender empowerment forward not only within the UAE but throughout the GCC."*

Warwick Hunt, PwC's Middle East Managing Partner, started by thanking Mrs Al Kaylani and saying how delighted PwC was to be partnering again with AIWF in this particular forum.

He outlined the PwC approach and vision and said *"the question of empowering young women is fundamental to our aspiration of bringing a dynamic level of growth to all our activities as we go forward. But in setting our vision there are three elements, the first mentoring as being essential to the development of women's talent. The second is networking and our analysis and research indicates that networks are not particularly easy for women to come by. The third is the entire question of leadership style and connection. Leadership is very personal and an amazing journey"* he said offering thoughts from what he has learnt from his relationship with his own daughters. Warwick Hunt added *"There are a number of issues that impact on women's success in the work place such as preconception of their roles and abilities. PwC is creating women to women connection within its organisation – it can be cross-cultural, often cross-border and Dubai is excellent for that."*

Research carried out for the Dubai Women Establishment shows that the current leadership style of Arab women in the Middle East, particularly Dubai, is less autocratic and more inclusive, communicating more, less power hungry with more attention to detail placing emphasis on emotional intelligence."

He explained that the PwC Women in Business Initiative is providing a sense of community and connectivity, creating opportunities for networking and visibility, education, professional and personal development, providing role models and a mentoring environment, connecting women with the firms' leadership and current and future clients and through corporate social responsibility initiatives with the community"

Mrs Faiza Al Sayed, Vice President, Dubai Business Women's Council, deputising for Mrs Raja Al Gurg, Managing Director, Easa Saleh Al Gurg Group and President, Dubai Business Women's Council, in the **Beyond the Glass Ceiling** session urged the following, *"The lack of women in leadership positions is primarily a problem of internal talent management. Challenges such as these exist in any industry. Those aspiring to be the leaders of tomorrow must persevere. At the same time, they should not be afraid to speak their minds. Those who excel in their professional lives did not get there without sacrifice. Here in the UAE we have learnt that the higher you aim the*

greater the risks. But the tactic is never to compromise on your goal. Upgrade your ambitions instead."

Sara Akbar, CEO & Founder, Kuwait Energy, Kuwait, an outstanding engineer and role model, inspired the young delegates with the story of her successful career and the challenges she had met to reach her leading role in a field not traditionally known as one for women.

Sara quoted Einstein, saying that *"Imagination is more important than science"*. She related how that thought had guided her in moving onwards and upwards from being a deskbound engineer to persuading the senior management to let her use her technical expertise in the oil fields, to setting a record of capping a record 42 burning oils wells in 45 days and eventually leaving government service and getting the support of investors to make a difference by creating her own energy company which has two women out of seven on the board.

Sara urged the young leaders present *"never give up trying, don't be afraid to show your power, do everything to reach your professional goals and don't forget your career is yours"*. and spoke of her belief that today *"women's empowerment and economic development go hand in hand. If you care about economic growth then women have to be part of the solution."*

Ms Iman Al Midfa, Director General, Sharjah Business Women Council, in identifying challenges for business women, said there were certain limitations on the choices of education type and career path and social expectations which meant that women are generally underestimated. The biggest challenge for every woman is her own perception of what she can and can't do and she went on to say, *"If she can break the glass roof that she has placed on top of her own head, she can reach her targets. Starting a business is easy for many women but sustainability is an issue when they choose a business not compatible with their experience or knowledge. Information is power and technology is a very good medium, allowing exposure to different cultures and best practices and there is power in social media in building great networks"*.

Ms Maryam Darwish, Customer Relations Executive, Al Futtaim Motors, UAE told the delegates of her transition from a young Emirati bride and mother raising her family of four before, at the age of 33 years, breaking into the world of work and her dream of working with cars, a profession her father and brothers thought was too dangerous for her. Hard work and determination gained her recognition, respect in a male dominated environment and promotion. She said that *"Emirati women worldwide are discriminated against because we are portrayed as family women but many women look up to me now, even my mother. They are all proud of me because I proved myself in the workplace."*

A supportive and ever encouraging family gave **Ms Malak Fares, Business Presenter, Sky News Arabia** the belief in her capabilities and self confidence inspiring her achievements. Speaking on ***Opportunities and Challenges for Young Women Leaders***. Malak said the two pillars that make up the foundation of any success story for women are how women perceive themselves and how women are perceived. She praised forums like the one being held that day providing networking, role models and mentoring but pointed out that governments need to offer more incentives to foster entrepreneurship, while

enhancing corporate structures and transparency. Public – private partnership initiatives should focus on channelling proper funding to promising entrepreneurship and SMEs.

Ms Hala Kazim, Founder, Journey Through Change, an Emirati, who established her business in 1993, gave her advice in ***Mentorship & Coaching: Be a Better Leader*** on how to balance life, juggling family roles with work. She said *"You can't give to anyone if you can't give to yourself. You must be happy and have time for yourself but always move forward with a goal"*. Hala's talk was inspiring, her programme providing encouragement for women who are finding it tough to progress in these times.



left to right Ms Sara Akbar, CEO and Founder, Kuwait Energy Company, Mr Warwick Hunt, Managing Partner, Middle East PwC, Mrs Haifa Al Kaylani, Chairman, AIWF, Mrs Faiza Al Sayed, Vice President, Dubai Business Women Council

Relating ***My Story*** and reflecting on leadership, **Ms Rasha Al Danhani, Chairman and Owner, PappaRoti General Trading LLC**. gave an amazing account of her dream to introduce something "out of the ordinary". Graduating with a degree in General Business and developing her career on property development and banking and then launching a marine spa concept for women, Rasha realised that entrepreneurship, developing a niche product, the PappaRoti signature buns, was the foundation for her success. She said *"Through research and dedication, I have overcome the barriers to break into cult café culture and informed my customers about PappaRoti through a dedicated marketing and social media campaign. Imparting news and promotions has built a relationship, resulting in brand loyalty from our customers. I take a pride in being the first Emirati woman to bring the PappaRoti franchise to the region despite not being sure how people would perceive it and the risk of not being the right timing for this venture"*.

Teamwork featured in the account **Ms Lara Tarakjian, Executive Director, Silkor Holding**, gave in ***My Story*** of her success as a talented young entrepreneur. Working principally with her brother and starting a business together, learning everything from scratch, their family and friends helped them promote their product. Lara urged flexibility and determination to see them through difficult times. She was proud of empowering women and of the fact that Silkor has a 99% female workforce.

Dr Nadia Younis, Country Regulatory Head-Gulf & Levant Markets, Pfizer, demonstrated through her presentation why people and particularly ***Why Women Matter*** to Pfizer. Dr Nadia spoke of their policies which cater for women through the aspects of flexibility and trust, attracting them to the Pfizer workforce which now has females as 34% of its workforce. Pfizer excels at retaining and nourishing talent

and recognises through its management process that women constitute 50%.

Ms Amna Al Falasi, Real Estate Consultant, had found *The Power of Social Media* a creative outlet to showcase talent. Establishing a network to express her love of fashion and help promote women in that field had united women of all ages as the blogs showed. Her service in promoting a fashion designer's work, providing important information about trends, showed the power and reach of social media can be used productively. Amna's message to participants in pursuing their dreams was *"Don't settle for less than your worth."*

In Women and the Social Media, delegates learned from **Ms Iba Masoud, Co-Founder & Chief Executive Officer, Gradberry** of the runaway success of the launch in November 2011 of this Middle East leading careers portal for student internships, free-lance positions and entry level jobs. This inventive use of social media to connect and notify students and connect them with employers brought a plethora of questions and as one commentator said *"it was encouraging seeing a young woman giving back to her fellow peers and promoting job finding for this generation."*

Ms Noha Topalian, Senior Director of Treasury, Asia, Middle East and Africa, PepsiCo, underlined the fact that women leaders drive better CSR and Sustainability. *"Through more frequent application of the leading five facets of leadership behaviour: participative decision making, inspiration, expectation and rewards, role model and people development, women contribute to a stronger organisational performance than men. Partnering with PlaNet Finance, PepsiCo puts a focus on women and youth in helping them start a business through training. The pillars of human sustainability, environmental sustainability and talent sustainability support the PepsiCo Performance with Purpose and we ask 'can what is good for business be also good for the world and can what is good for the world be also be good for business?'"*

Relating to the business advantages that hiring, retaining and promoting women brings to the market place, **Mr Badr Jafar, President Crescent Petroleum & Co Founder, The Pearl Initiative**, pointed out the social importance of women's representation in the management of companies and the clear evidence of the resulting positive economic or financial impact. He said *"it is a mistake to attribute growth in women's corporate representation solely to better access to education, more than anything it is a consequence of a long overdue change in attitudes, a recognition of the importance of women's involvement in corporate decisions and good governance on the whole."* Although he quoted the 2012 GMI Ratings Global Survey as showing that for the first time ever, women hold more than one in ten board seats globally, there was a wide variation between regions and the MENA region still has a long way to catch up with the industrialised world in this regard. *"Companies that learn to adapt to all its employees' needs will be better able to respond to the challenge of an ageing workforce and the demands of the next generation of knowledge workers. That is, the optimisation of women's talents boosts the bottom line."*

Ms Shelly Porges, Senior Adviser, Global Entrepreneurship Program, State Department USA spoke in *The Way Forward* of including more women in the economy at top level positions when she said *"It is the smart thing to do.*

It is good for business and it is good for economies. The costs of inequality and the rewards of equality are enormous. Although Dubai and the UAE lead throughout the region, helping to mobilise people to foster entrepreneurship, the MENA region has the lowest proportion of women-owned formal, small and medium enterprises at just 12 -15%. Structural changes are needed to make the business climate more inclusive."

Mrs Al Kaylani summed up the day's proceedings when she said *"Together, we want to create a network for the exchange of ideas, experience and opportunity for and between young women in the Arab world"*. She thanked and praised the teams that had cooperated to put together and support such a successful day - Partners, PwC, Memac and the Dubai Business Women Council, the Dubai Chamber of Trade and Industry and the AIWF team and said *"AIWF is proud to work closely with them and all AIWF's Global Corporate and Institutional Partners in this important initiative introducing a new generation to commonly shared principles, developing their leadership skills and harnessing the energy and talent of potential young women leaders to contribute to the social and economic development of their communities and the Arab region as a whole."*



Young Arab women leaders in discussion

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

ARAB INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FORUM CONFERENCE

*'Young Arab Women Leaders:
The Voice of the Future'*

in partnership with PwC
in cooperation with and hosted by
Birzeit University, Palestine
on Wednesday, 22 May 2013

ARAB INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FORUM ANNUAL CONFERENCE

hosted by Ghorfa-Arab
German Chamber of Commerce & Industry
in Berlin on 22 - 23 October 2013

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

AIWF AUTUMN GET TOGETHER
HOSTED BY DLA PIPER
AIWF GLOBAL DIAMOND PARTNER
IN LONDON ON 21 NOVEMBER 2012



Mrs Haifa Al Kaylani, Chairman AIWF



Mr David Church, International Development Partner, DLA Piper

AIWF Members, Partners and key contacts came together at a Reception hosted by AIWF valued and long term global partner, DLA Piper UK LLP at their London offices on Wednesday 21 November 2012. Opening her remarks, Mrs Haifa Al Kaylani, Founder Chairman AIWF, thanked Mr David Church, International Development Partner, for his warm welcome and kind hospitality on this occasion. It was a very special evening overlooking the magnificent floodlit views of the City of London, when AIWF Members were able to network with distinguished guests from all sectors of business in the capital and also to welcome some overseas visitors, appreciating the opportunity for AIWF and DLA Piper to be able to talk of matters of mutual interest on which their valuable cooperation is based.

Speaking of the special and busy year for AIWF in 2012, when its overall attention has been upon **Emerging Economies, Emerging Leaderships**, Mrs Al Kaylani said *"Our activities and advocacy have reinforced the AIWF mission by putting its main focus on investment in women and youth, nurturing the growth of young women as leaders, entrepreneurs and job creators and becoming future agents for lasting sustainable development towards social and economic recovery in the Arab world. The programme highlights included two key events in March, a reception and a special Roundtable Dinner discussion in London with our Institutional Partner, the Arab British Chamber of Commerce and Industry, on the theme of **Common Vision for Sustainable Development** and a major conference on **Women and Youth as Drivers of Change** at the American University of Sharjah, under the Patronage of His Highness, Sheikh Dr Sultan Bin Mohammad Al Qassimi, the Ruler of Sharjah and Founder and President of the American University of Sharjah.*

A key initiative within the year has been the AIWF/ PWC development within the Arab region of an enterprising programme of three one-day innovative conferences in Amman, Beirut and Dubai, providing the arena for potential young women leaders to build their skills and gain self confidence towards empowerment as the next generation of women leaders through coaching and mentoring."

Mr David Church spoke of the culture DLA Piper promotes *"where everyone has the opportunity to grow their*

career. Our strategy for diversity is developed at a board level and implemented across our global offices by local teams that have responsibility for ensuring the firm-wide diversity objectives are met" He added, *"At DLA Piper, we are very proud to have significantly increased our involvement in AIWF initiatives across the Middle East over the past year. Three employees from DLA Piper, all Arab women, took part in events in Sharjah, Amman and Beirut. Tala Al-Hejailan gave a presentation on the importance of social media and internet in empowering women in Saudi Arabia and Rana Abu Samaha and Wafa' Tarnowska gave presentations on the importance to women of running successful CR programmes. All enjoyed speaking at these events and found them fascinating, stimulating and incredibly worthwhile. We look forward to participating in the session in Dubai and an even more action-packed schedule in 2013!"*

In conclusion and in reiterating her thanks to David Church and DLA Piper, Mrs Al Kaylani said *"we look forward to maintaining the DLA Piper support and participation as we move ahead with our advocacy and activity for the empowerment of women through connectivity, partnership and innovation and, within the network of AIWF global partners, build success together."*



Mrs Al Kaylani greeting guests

REPORT ON COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS
WORKSHOP ENTITLED
PRESENCE AND PERSUASION
HELD IN LONDON ON 6 FEBRUARY 2013

On 6 February 2013 I attended the ***Presence and Persuasion*** workshop hosted by Melanie Cleary and Sarah Wachter, (AIWF Corporate Member Wachter-Gallagher), at the Arab-British Chamber of Commerce in London. The workshop was designed to strengthen the professional communication skills of Arab women. The day was divided into three sessions, with networking breaks in between, each hour-long session focused on one of the three topics: possessing presence, developing your voice and writing effectively. Mrs Haifa Al Kaylani, Founder Chairman of the Arab International Women's Forum gave the keynote speech.

Irene Nathan, professional skills coach, led the first session entitled *Presence and Image*. She emphasised the importance of selling *"Me.inc"* and not to forget that *"you are a project"* too. Ms Nathan highlighted many things one usually overlooks, such as posture and emotions. I learnt a lot of interesting tips regarding the correct attire and how certain clothes reflect your character, making your first impression before you speak.

Brenda Ellison, professional skills coach, led the next session aimed at *Delivering Messages for Impact*. The second we sat with Ms Ellison, we learnt our first lesson that “*we were introducing ourselves incorrectly*”. Self-improvement is always challenging, but as soon as we opened up, I learnt many things from the importance of eye contact to the power of silence. This experience pointed out the impact sharing a story brings to your message, making you more credible and ensuring a successful dialogue.

Sarah Wachter, professional writer and coach, led the final session ‘*Writing for Results*’. Writing for some is the easiest mode of expression, but for others it’s the hardest. During this session, Ms Wachter shared with us useful advice to make writing about ourselves easier. What helped the most was her suggestion to “*write the way you speak*”, keeping it simple and direct.

Mrs Al Kaylani gave an insightful speech on the subject of *Why female role models and women leaders are essential for empowerment*. Coming from a philanthropic background working with Arab women, Mrs Al Kaylani supplied us with vital information encouraging young women to pursue fields that were thought to be unattainable. Her speech covered everything from the role of women in the region, to methods of empowering women. However, Mrs Al Kaylani explained that there are challenges that we must take into account.

Some of the challenges Mrs Al Kaylani mentioned were the constraints women face with access to capital, technology and networking, all of which are essential resources needed to sustain and develop businesses. Another major point she raised, which I believe is hindering women’s involvement most in the region, is the lack of skills training and the traditionalist approach many people still hold.

By the end of the day, I realised how much self-improvement is inter-related, proving there is always more to learn and build on. I came out of this experience having learnt a lot, having met very interesting people keeping me busy with much to think about. Overall, I could not have imagined a better day.

Reema Aljuffali
AIWF Volunteer

REPORT OF EASTWEST INSTITUTE’S 9TH WORLDWIDE SECURITY CONFERENCE IN BRUSSELS ON 12 NOVEMBER, 2012

On November 12, 2012, the EastWest Institute (EWI)’s 9th Worldwide Security Conference, *Reshaping Economic Security in Southwest Asia and the Middle East*, brought together close to 300 high-level policy makers from the region and beyond, heads of regional and international organisations, key business and investment executives and public opinion leaders from around the world to brainstorm on the central theme of economic security and to discuss possible solutions to the energy-water-food crises in the region. The event was co-sponsored by the *World Customs Organization* and the *Financial Times*.

The choice of this year’s theme reflects the critical importance both of economic security in the 21st century and of the broad region of Southwest Asia and the Middle East—in the light of the 2014 withdrawal from Afghanistan and the

consequences of profound change unfolding in the region. Two EWI Board Members and prominent women—AIWF Founder Chairman Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani and former Secretary-General of the International Chamber of Commerce Maria Livanos Cattai, were key moderators for this conference.

Finland’s former President and EWI Board Member, Martti Ahtisaari, delivered the keynote address, encouraging participants to make specific recommendations on cross-border infrastructure, the water-energy food nexus, youth unemployment and social marginalisation. A Nobel Laureate, Mr Ahtisaari called for the creation of new regional organisations in the Middle East and Southwest Asia to curb conflicts and emphasised the need for effective peace-making. “*The catastrophe of Syria demonstrates this need*,” he declared.

The plenary sessions included addresses from Ambassador Somaya Saad, Egyptian Assistant Foreign Affairs Minister for Multilateral Economic Affairs and International Cooperation; Ambassador Patricia Flor, EU Special Representative for Central Asia; Ambassador Mara Marinaki, Managing Director of the European External Action Service; Jawed Ludin, Afghan Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs; and Ambassador Hesham Youssef, Assistant Secretary General of the League of Arab States. The speakers acknowledged the importance of strengthening dialogue and cooperation on security matters in the region while fostering economic development, reducing poverty, promoting cross-border trade and addressing the numerous social challenges in Southwest Asia and the Middle East.

There was consensus that Afghanistan represents a connecting bridge amongst its neighbours, especially in the economic sphere. Conference participants argued that the peace and stability in Afghanistan and the region can only be achieved through deepening cooperation in diverse areas including trade, transit, health, education, energy and infrastructure development. Ambassador of Pakistan to Belgium, Luxembourg and the EU Munawar, Saeed Bhatti, said “*Economic opportunities would significantly reduce the tendency towards violence and foster reconciliation by creating hope for a better future for the Afghan youth. Afghanistan, therefore, needs greater moral and material support from the region and international community to rekindle this hope.*”

Speaking of the challenges to human and economic security, ISESCO Program Specialist Dr Maha Merezak underlined the importance of reinforcing women’s capacity building as one of the dimensions of human security. Head of UNDP Human Development Report, Dr Khalid Malik, concluded his address on human security by calling for regional cooperation on water and food security to promote the availability, accessibility and quality of food and shared water management enabling equitable and reasonable utilisation. He pointed out the need for improving systems of social protection and advancing empowerment through better access to assets and opportunities, especially for women. A major pillar of human security, he emphasised, is the respect for women’s rights. Because of the unique set of challenges women face in Afghanistan, better implementation of the law on violence against women is critical.

Liza Kurukulasuriya
*Assistant to the Vice President &
Head of EastWest Institute’s Global Security Program*

WHAT I LEARNT FROM THE AIWF CONFERENCE HELD IN SHARJAH, UAE IN MAY 2012

by the Executive Director of the Alliance for International Women's Rights

In the spring of 2012, at the kind invitation of Mrs Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani, as Vice President International of the Women's Leadership Board at Harvard University, I had the good fortune to attend AIWF's conference in Sharjah, UAE entitled *Emerging Economies, Emergency Leaderships: Arab Women and Youth as Drivers of Change*. This was followed by a wonderful study tour to Jordan, hosted by the delightful and gracious Mrs Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani. I participated in the trip in my role as the director of a small non-profit organisation called the Alliance for International Women's Rights (AIWR), which works to educate and support women leaders and future women leaders in developing countries through long-distance Empowerment Programs (www.aiwr.org). For the last seven years, AIWR has been focusing its efforts on Central Asia and Afghanistan. I travelled to Sharjah and Jordan with the hope that the trip would broaden my perspective and offer new inspiration by learning about the goals, challenges and on-the-ground efforts of women's rights workers in the Arab world. And it did.

The AIWF conference provided a rare and wonderful opportunity to learn from and connect with dynamic young women from the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Jordan, Qatar, Palestine and Saudi Arabia, as well as women and men from the international community, including Italy, the UK, USA, France, South Africa, Germany and India. The Jordan portion of the study tour focused on visiting women's education and entrepreneur programmes as well as an amazing school for girls in Amman, Jordan. The programmes, which are primarily funded or run through the Jordan River Foundation, under the supervision of her Majesty Queen Rania, are most impressive – especially the Madrasati Secondary School for Girls, which is filled with some of the most confident, bright, eager young girls I have ever met anywhere in the world.

I returned from the conference and study tour enormously impressed by the young Arab women I met and their amazing energy and drive. But what truly inspired me was their ingenuity. While these young women were clear about the challenges and obstacles they faced, they were also optimistic and undaunted, enthusiastically looking to new technology and creative new business models to successfully find new ways to reach, educate and economically empower themselves and other women and girls. These young women, who are poised to become significant leaders in their communities and countries, fill me with hope for the future of all women and girls in the Arab region as well as for women's rights efforts around the world.

As I continue with my work to help empower women and girls in Afghanistan, I keep with me the core lesson that I learned in Sharjah and Jordan – do not be daunted by challenges or obstacles, but instead see them as a chance to think creatively for new ways to overcome them, taking advantage of all the new tools and technology available to us. For example, while Afghan women and girls are often prohibited by cultural restrictions from travelling to other cities or abroad to obtain further education, they are permitted to visit a local women's centre, where they can use technology to provide them with on-line classes and provide face-to-face exchanges via Skype with an AIWR mentor for personal tutoring and mentoring. These same tools can be and are being used to overcome

cultural restrictions to help Afghan women educate themselves, network with and support each other, and better connect with the international community.

I am thankful to AIWF, Mrs Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani and all the young women I met in Sharjah and Jordan for their inspiration and the renewed energy they have given to me and to AIWR.

Lisa Herb

Executive Director

Alliance for International Women's Rights (www.aiwr.org)

SUSTAINABLE ENERGY AND ITS ROLE IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: THE BEDOUIN WOMEN PROJECT

The importance of addressing long-term sustainable solutions for energy needs is a global concern to all and a topic on which women are increasingly becoming involved at various levels.

Delivering a keynote speech at the Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week (ADSW) which brings together experts in the fields of energy from 150 countries, Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan said *"Without sustainable energy, there can be no sustainable development"* and quoted that *"Today 1.4 billion people, 1 in 5 in the world cannot access grid electricity, while for a billion more, access is unreliable."*

Queen Rania underlined the importance of renewable energy in creating new opportunities in markets saying that the Arab region is *"rich in the energy of our overwhelming young population but poor in the opportunities we can offer them"* and spoke of the boom that is possible in science, engineering and manufacturing, building green industries and green jobs and opening new markets for aspiring entrepreneurs.

Her Majesty expressed her pride that many innovative solutions to the challenges being faced are coming from the Arab world, citing Bedouin women in Jordan who are training to be solar engineers and Egypt, where farmers are exploring innovative irrigation methods to reduce water stress.

Women's empowerment in this field was brought to the attention of the participants attending the conference on *Young Arab Women Leaders: the Voice of the Future* in Dubai on 10 December, when AIWF was given a special opportunity to have a private screening of an award winning film 'Rafeaa: Solar Mama'. A powerful and watchable documentary, it follows the story of Rafea, a strong minded Bedouin woman, who lives with her daughters in one of Jordan's poorest desert villages, as she struggles against tradition and society as well as family opposition in seeking to become the first solar engineer in Jordan. With the support of the Jordanian Ministry of the Environment, she travelled to India joining other women from very different cultures to learn the skills of this modern technology. She returned home having gained not only technical skills but strength in her resolve to teach other impoverished women in a culture where they rarely do formal work. Her mission to bring them the option of solar technology and the chance to improve village life gives off a very powerful message.

The opportunity for Rafeaa's training was provided by the Barefoot College, a non-governmental organisation that provides basic services and solutions to problems in rural communities, with the objective of making them self-sufficient and sustainable. These 'Barefoot solutions' cover solar energy, water, education, health care, rural handicrafts, people's action, communication, women's empowerment and wasteland development.

CONGRATULATIONS TO AIWF BOARD MEMBERS

Members of the Board of Directors of the Arab International Women's Forum have been recognised in various Awards recently announced as follows

MRS HAIFA FAHOUM AL KAYLANI



Mrs Al Kaylani, encouraging young people at the Wharton MENA Business Conference 2013 at which MBA and undergraduate students were engaged in dialogue on positive social and economic changes in the region

The Arab International Women's Forum is proud to congratulate Chairman and Founder, Mrs Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani, who has been recognised for the third consecutive year as one of the *Arabian Business 100 Most Powerful Arab Women*.

Mrs Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani is seen by many as a female role model and agent of change in the Middle East having been responsible for setting up the Arab International Women's Forum, an organisation, now in its second decade, that brings together 1,500 associations, individuals, corporations and partnerships based in 45 nations and six continents of the world.

Speaking of the second decade of the AIWF Mission, the focus of which has been on **Emerging Economies, Emerging Leaderships**, Mrs Al Kaylani said *"Our activities and advocacy have reinforced the AIWF mission by putting its main focus on investment in women and youth, nurturing the growth of young women as leaders, entrepreneurs and job creators and becoming future agents for lasting sustainable development towards social and economic recovery in the Arab world."*

MR SAAD ABDUL-LATIF



Mr Saad Abdul-Latif, Chief Executive Officer of PepsiCo Asia, Middle East and Africa has been honoured for his outstanding corporate leadership by the **TAKREEM** Initiative, at the Takreem Arab Achievement Awards Ceremony in Manama, Bahrain held on 30 November under the Patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeeka Bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa of Bahrain.

Mr Abdul-Latif was recognised for his leadership and vision at PepsiCo, where he currently leads more than 40,000 employees, across more than 90 countries, contributing to \$7.4 billion in annual revenues in 2011.

As an active supporter of causes related to the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, Mr Abdul-Latif received the Outstanding Corporate Leadership award from TAKREEM for sustained excellence in business and innovation to ensure growth in PepsiCo as well as for enhancing social development through initiatives such as Tomooh, an education programme, founded by Mr Abdul-Latif in 2006, which partners with local and international organisations to empower Arab youth through education.

Mr Abdul-Latif initiated PepsiCo's Benefactor

Partnership with the Arab International Women's Forum, of which he is a Director and he sits on the Middle East Board of Directors for PlaNet Finance, an organisation which fights poverty through the development of microfinance. *"He possesses a natural energy of always wanting to give,"* says Nadia al Shadhir, the private-partnership manager for PlaNet Finance in Dubai. *"Mr. Abdul-Latif's dedication and support for PlaNet Finance's initiatives, particularly those around women's development, education and youth entrepreneurship are to be commended at all times."*

MRS RAJA AL GURG



Mrs Raja Al Gurg, Managing Director, Easa Saleh Al Gurg Group, President, Dubai Business Women's Council and AIWF Board Member has been recognised as *The Most Influential Arab Woman in Family Business* by Forbes Middle East and awarded as such. A gala

dinner held to honour Mrs Al Gurg and all other awardees was held on 12 March in Dubai.

Mrs Raja Al Gurg has also been recognised as one of the *Arabian Business 100 Most Powerful Arab Women*. Mrs Al Gurg is Managing Director of Easa Saleh Al Gurg Group, responsible for 23 manufacturing and trading companies and some 3,000 employees. She is also the President of the Federation of the UAE Chambers of Commerce & Industry Businesswomen's Committee as well as holding the Presidency of the Dubai Chamber of Commerce & Industry's Businesswomen's Committee, a member of the Dubai Educational Council and of the National Advisory Council for the College of Business Sciences at Zayed University.

DR SHAIKHA AL MASKARI



Dr Shaikha Al Maskari, Chairperson, Al Maskari Holding, Tricon Group and Johnson Controls and Global Communications

At this year's Excellence Awards Gala, **AmCham Abu Dhabi** (the American Chamber of Commerce, Abu Dhabi) brought together 300 business and government officials to recognise leading local and American

companies, institutions, and entrepreneurs for their dedication to strengthening US - UAE commercial relations. The finalists were honoured on Friday evening at a celebration gala at Fairmont Bab Al Bahr, Abu Dhabi sponsored by ExxonMobil and several other generous supporters.

Dr Shaikha Al Maskari, Chairperson, Al Maskari Holding, Tricon Group and Johnson Controls and Global Communications and AIWF Board Member received the **Falcon Award** for her outstanding commitment to sustainable US - UAE business relations.

MRS MONA YOUSIF ALMOAYYED



Mrs Mona Yousif Almoayyed

Mrs Mona Yousif Almoayyed, AIWF Board Member of Bahrain has been recognised within the list of the *Arabian Business 100 Most Powerful Arab Women*. Mrs Almoayyed has also been announced by Forbes Middle East as *the Third Most Influential Arab Woman in Family Business*. Mrs Almoayyed is Managing Director of Y K Almoayyed & Sons and is indirectly responsible for a staff of 2,000 and approximately 300 brands ranging from luxury goods and home electronics to heavy equipment, medical technologies and concrete. The first woman to be elected to the Board of a publicly traded company in Bahrain, the following year she became the first woman to be elected to the Board of the Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI).

MRS SUNG-JOO KIM



Photograph by kind permission of New Daily www.newdaily.co.kr

Left to right: Mrs Sung-joo Kim, Chairperson of MCM Holding AG and Sungjoo Group, Ms Geun-Hye Park, the first woman President of Korea

Mrs Sung-Joo Kim, Chairperson of MCM Holding AG and Sungjoo Group

Mrs Sung-Joo Kim was involved in the Korean Presidential Election as a co-Chair of the Presidential Committee for Ms Geun-Hye Park who was successfully elected on 19 December 2012 as the first woman President in Korean history.

"This achievement represents a revolutionary step for Korean women in social status and will also be able to influence the status of women in the rest of Asia," said Sung -Joo Kim.

Mrs Sung-Joo Kim has been invited as the keynote speaker for the upcoming Annual Women's Empowerment Principles Event hosted by the UN Global Compact (UNGC) on 6 March 2013 in New York to celebrate International Women's Day.

WOMEN APPOINTED TO SHURA COUNCIL IN SAUDI ARABIA

In recent years, we have seen progress for women in Saudi Arabia, especially in education. His Majesty King Abdullah has moved to promote equality for women through the provision of more access to higher education and media outlets, a move that has highlighted the important role of women, while creating numerous opportunities for them.

King Abdullah has been a leading agent of reform, introducing municipal elections for the first time in Saudi Arabia in 2005. In 2011, he granted women the right to vote and run as candidates in the next local election, set for 2015. *"We made this decision because we refuse to marginalise women in the Saudi society in their roles that comply with the Islamic Sharia and following consultations with many of our scholars who supported it,"* King Abdullah said. *"Muslim women in our history have had stances that cannot be sidelined."*

For the first time in history, on 19 February, 2013, thirty women were sworn in to the previously all-male consultative Shura Council. Two decrees were amended in the Council's statute to guarantee women's representation in the body, introducing a 20 percent quota for women in the country's 150 member Council. The Shura Council, whose members are appointed by the King, acts as a formal advisory council debating policies and legislation.

Seven of the thirty appointees have already previously worked with the Council as consultants. The women appointed to the Shura Council are among the country's elite with 27 holding PhD degrees, human rights activists and two Princesses. One of the new female council members, Thuraya Al Arrayed, believes it could help reshape opinions of women among Saudis. *"I'm not just talking about the Shura Council, I'm talking about the empowerment of women and their*

participation in the general affairs of the country," she said.

The much-anticipated opening of the sixth term of the advisory council went smoothly and the women members consolidated their presence by securing three senior positions in the Council's committees. Dr Thurayya Obaid was named deputy chairperson of the Human Rights and Petitions Committee, Dr Zainab Abu Talib, deputy chairperson of the Information and Cultural Committee and Dr Lubna Al Ansari, deputy chairperson of the Health Affairs and Environment Committee.

According to several members, the personal status law and the full rights of divorcées and widows would top the list of concerns. They insisted that they were fully aware of the plight of divorced women and the women who are deprived of their rights to inheritance due to customs and traditions that have nothing to do with Islam. Nonetheless, Dr. Khawla Al-Kuraya, a council member, professor of pathology, and director at the King Fahad National Center for Children's Cancer and Research, put it plainly, *"This enormous, rapid and noteworthy progress means Saudi society and its governing body are finally ready to acknowledge and respect women's voices and their rights."*

These results should only encourage more women to contribute and assure them that it is possible to make their mark on their community. *"Your place in the Shura Council is not as those who have been honoured, but as those who have been charged with a duty, as you represent part of society,"* King Abdullah said, addressing the new female members.

Reema Aljuffali
AIWF Volunteer

WOMEN AFTER THE ARAB SPRING: WHAT CHANGES CAN WE EXPECT FOR EMPLOYMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP?

Economic development cannot be fulfilled and improved without women's full integration and closing gaps in gender equality.

Women's participation in the labour force is essential to Middle East and North African economic development. These regions need to increase the level of women's education and progress in terms of gender equality to demonstrate real progress.

Two years after the Tunisian and Egyptian uprisings, did women's intervention in these historic revolutions change their role in society, and did it have any impact from the standpoint of all women in the Arab world in the social and work environment?

Tunisian Situation

Tunisia has always been a model for women in its neighbouring countries. The ban on polygamy, repudiation and forced union has been an example to women's emancipation, including access to a better education, an example for other North African countries.

Women were at the heart of the news attention during the revolution's demonstrations, and what women fought for such as freedom of expression, they continue today as they want to maintain their status, and even more considering this new awaited freedom of entrepreneurship.

Several associations continue to fight for those rights, for women to be able to work, manage, and start their own businesses with more assurance. In Tunisia only, a number of associations involving women are present and continue to work for women's full role in participating in public life. One of these associations is L'Association Tunisienne des Femmes Démocrates (AFDT) which is fighting harder to maintain Tunisian women's rights and equality, fearing that the new moderate government is not as moderate as it claims.

Expression through the seventh art is one of the industries that Tunisian people were waiting for. Banned under the previous regime, cinema schools are trying to flourish and to be able to launch a new generation of film enthusiasts. However, there is little hope when there is a lack of finance. Young entrepreneurs need to use their own personal finance because as far as the new government is concerned, art does not have value.

Situation in other North African Countries and in the Middle East.

Morocco and Algeria did not face the Arab Spring revolutions, and both governments in their own way tried to avoid a populist uprising.

Both countries have associations for women entrepreneurs, in Morocco, L'Association des Femmes Chefs d'Entreprise du Maroc was established in 2000, with recognition and support of the AIWF. In Algeria, the AME (Association Algerienne des Managers et Entrepreneurs) received its approval in 2009, and the older Association des Femmes Entrepreneurs contributes to women's business training, and

encourages managers to make the jump from leader in the public or private sector, to becoming entrepreneurs.

Such organisations have strong ambitions to promote and motivate women in the working environment, targeting everyone from managers to the unemployed, and participating in European, African and Middle Eastern economic and social forums.

Whereas the Moroccan association claims that 82% of entrepreneurship issues women face, from an administrative and financial perspective, are problems faced by the majority of entrepreneurs in bureaucratic countries; only 9% claimed that entrepreneurial issues are social and related to the condition of women.

However, women's emancipation in the Kingdom is recent with literacy reaching 30% at a national level in 2011, a success following large efforts made particularly towards women who represented 80% of those benefitting from such programmes, but there is a large gap between urban and rural areas.

In Algeria, women's priority is social equality, which will hopefully lead to equality in the workplace. In Tunisia and in Algeria, 60% of university and college attendees are women, a figure increasing up to 75% in other Arab countries. High youth unemployment in the region unfortunately features a higher rate among women.

In Libya, women also fought for the revolution despite the fact that they were not in the front line of the media news. Now, the battle women are fighting for is empowerment. Two women are at the head of ministries, and it demonstrates to women that posts of responsibility are possible in an extremely conservative country. However, there is a long way to go in the old society where the violation of many of women's rights, including rape crime, remains unpunished.

Egyptian women want to remain enthusiastic and continue to work for a better future two years after the beginning of the revolution. The optimism of women entrepreneurs is still at its peak and small actions are frequently observed such as fund-raising to help underprivileged women survive, study, develop and finance their own projects at a microeconomic level.

According to the latest report from the World Economic Forum about the Global Gender Gap which covers 135 countries and uses economic, political, education and health criteria, none of the North African or Middle Eastern countries rank in the top 100 of gender equality, with UAE as the first in the region ranked 107th, with the best score for educational attainment. However, all countries have seen an improvement since the last publication in 2011, climbing by an average of three levels in only one year, and up to four for UAE and Qatar, which indicates positive results and progress.

All over the Arab world, changes are slow but happening and organisations such as the AIWF are present to help women in networking throughout the region, encouraging ambition in countries where gender inequality, particularly in some areas such as politics and law remains significant. Women's work opportunities start with a solid foundation in

social rights and education is a priority. Literacy is increasing in all Arab countries, and has reached 98% in Qatar, 97% in Saudi Arabia and 94% in Syria according to the World Bank statistics in 2011, and this is the priority in closing gaps in gender equality.

Prospects in the region

The Arab Spring started just two years ago and continues to affect several countries. Results in new democracies will be hardly measurable in the short term, but women started fighting for their rights before the revolutions began, and will continue to raise awareness of education and health issues and ask for equal economic participation, opportunity and political empowerment.

As a young Arab woman gaining work experience in Europe and trying to bring entrepreneurial experience to Algeria, there is a constant feeling that young women will face many difficulties and challenges in male-dominated environments. Women are achieving recognition and showing a strong will to improve their condition. Revolutions start with women eager to impose equality, and fight in sectors and jobs where they are in a minority and this is what leads to change. Associations need to come together, create awareness between the different countries and show coalition and support, that opportunities are created and given to women willing to make a change.

Meriem Mahi

AIWF Member, Tunisia

ABCC PLANS FOR 2013

The Arab British Chamber of Commerce can anticipate a busy year in 2013 now that business is picking up and the global economy sets its sights on recovery.

The Chamber has a strategic role in facilitating closer commercial cooperation between British and Arab enterprises. In the coming year, we will continue to highlight new business opportunities across the Arab World as they emerge. The Chamber will endeavour to provide its members with all the essential services, support and advice that they require to help them transform opportunities into real commercial advantage.

As everyone is only too well aware, the past couple of years were not the easiest of times for doing business in parts of the Arab World. Now is a very good time to get involved as Arab governments seek to implement their ambitious investment strategies and enormous opportunities are increasingly becoming available. The historic friendship that the UK has long enjoyed with the Arab states is a huge asset that provides a solid foundation for companies seeking to build new ties and stronger relations in the future. The Chamber is determined to play its part in the economic recovery by assisting both British and Arab companies as they forge these new partnerships.

With this in mind, 2013 will see the Chamber organise a full programme of exclusive business events, conferences, roundtables and seminars. The programme got off to an excellent start in January with a ministerial business roundtable when the Chamber was privileged to host the Minister of Tourism for the Kingdom of Morocco, His Excellency Dr Lahcen Haddad. This event attracted high calibre delegates consisting of potential investors keen to find out about Morocco's 2020 vision for developing its tourism industry.

Following a highly successful business event on Libya last year, the Chamber is organising a *Libya Trade Day*

to be held in London in April 2013. The reconstruction and modernisation of Libya is opening up significant opportunities for UK investors, suppliers, consultants and service providers. The trade day will bring together business and industry leaders, policy makers, diplomats, government ministers and other key stakeholders. The Chamber is working closely with the Embassy of Libya, UK Trade & Investment, and Federation of Libyan Chambers of Commerce to organise this important conference which will be attended by a large business delegation from Libya.

As in previous years, the Chamber will be hosting regular ambassadorial business roundtables throughout 2013 to focus on specific Arab markets and to draw the attention of UK companies to the investment plans of the Arab governments and the potential for joint ventures and new business. Cultural training seminars for business executives and other cultural events are also to feature in this year's varied programme of activities.

A highlight of the Chamber's year will no doubt be the second *Arab British Economic Forum* which will aim to foster greater cooperation between Arab and British investors, consultants and business executives. The Economic Forum will adopt as its theme 'employment through education' and is scheduled to take place in June, a month that traditionally sees a large influx of Arab visitors to London. The Chamber cherishes its reputation as a prestigious venue for social networking and it is one of the purposes of the Economic Forum that it will facilitate new business partnerships by bringing together high net worth individuals, investors in commercial and residential real estate and specialised visitors from the Arab countries.

The Chamber will also continue with its productive collaborations with likeminded organisations in 2013 to enhance our activities programme and add value to our membership services. With this in mind, the Chamber looks forward to working closely with the AIWF, with whom it is proud to have signed a Memorandum of Understanding in 2009. We hope to see AIWF members and friends at some of our forthcoming events.

A NEW ROLE FOR HE SHEIKHA LUBNA BINT KHALID AL QASIMI

HE Sheikha Lubna Bint Khalid Al Qasimi has been appointed to head a new department in the UAE Government, the Ministry of Development and International Co-operation. In her new role Sheikha Lubna will have the task of boosting the UAE as a major donor and a key player in global human development.

The Foreign Aid Office now falls under the newly created Ministry of development and International Cooperation, which will decide policy and priorities for development and international aid. In 2011, UAE foreign aid reached Dh7.74 billion. Most went to programmes designed to meet the eight UN Millennium Development Goals, which include eradicating poverty and promoting universal education.

A minister since 2004, the first woman to hold such a post in the UAE, Sheikha Lubna held the Foreign Trade portfolio since 2008 and has been honoured by several countries including South Korea and Spain for her role in enhancing their relationships with the UAE.

A Founder Board Member of The Arab International Women's Forum, HE Sheikha Lubna has been recognised in 2013 as the most powerful Arab woman.

NEWS OF AIWF GLOBAL ANNUAL PARTNERS



AIWF welcomes Shell as a Platinum Partner for 2013

AIWF has valued the support of Shell since AIWF was founded and we are proud to have their additional support for our Programmes as a Platinum Partner in 2013

Mrs Sana Bardawil, Regional Communications Director, MENA, Shell International, has said *"Shell is delighted to continue our partnership with AIWF. It is a great pleasure to reinforce our long-standing relationship with an organisation that shares our principles and delivers timely initiatives for youth and women's empowerment in the Arab region that have our full backing."*

In welcoming this increased support, AIWF Chairman, Mrs Al Kaylani said *"We greatly appreciate this enhanced key alliance with Shell, a company that was not only our earliest partner but has been a steadfast supporter throughout in both annual and event partnerships. We welcome Shell back to its former status and to continuing to work together in close cooperation, helping to make a difference in all aspects of economic and public life in the Arab world."*

Present in over 100 countries with more than 100,000 employees, Shell helps to meet the world's growing energy demand in economically, environmentally and socially responsible ways. We produce 3.1 million barrels of oil equivalent every day, and sell transport fuel to some 10 million customers a day.

Shell is focused on delivery and growth, leveraging our strong portfolio and maintaining our commitment to sustainable development. We are convinced that contributing to sustainable development helps create business value and reduces operational and financial risk, making us a more cooperative and profitable company.

As a global energy company we set high standards of performance and ethical behaviours. We are judged by how we act – our reputation is upheld by how we live up to our core values of honesty, integrity and respect for people. The Shell General Business Principles, Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics help everyone at Shell act in line with these values and comply with all relevant legislation and regulations.



AIWF welcomes MCM Holding AG/ Sungjoo Group as new Diamond Partner

In announcing AIWF's newest Annual Global Partner, Mrs Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani, Chairman said *"We are proud and delighted to welcome MCM Holding AG/ Sungjoo Group as a valued AIWF Diamond Global Partner, joining our distinguished coalition of partners, sharing and working towards the achievement of our mission of Building Bridges, Building Business."*

This partnership brings to AIWF support from a sector not yet represented in the AIWF network of global partners and that is the fashion industry. It also signifies the AIWF recognition of entrepreneurship demonstrated by this company whose founder and leader Sung Joo Kim is internationally known for

her business acumen and her strong sense of corporate social responsibility."

Founded in 1976, MCM crafts luxury leather goods for the world's cosmopolitan professionals.

The brand reflects the inspiration and attitude from Munich's glamorous and legendary years - translating the spirit of this epoch for today's global nomad.

MCM is present in over 30 countries with 270 point of sales worldwide and has boutiques in major cities such as Berlin, Düsseldorf, London, New York, Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong and Seoul.

DUBAI CHAMBER

DUBAI BUSINESS WOMEN COUNCIL

AIWF and DBWC confirm their Cooperation in a new Institutional Partnership

Mrs Haifa Al Kaylani, Founder Chairman Arab International Women's Forum (AIWF), is pleased to announce the active cooperation that AIWF has enjoyed with the Dubai Business Women's Council (DBWC) over a number of years has been now recognised by both organisations as a formal Institutional Partnership.

In welcoming this special much closer link, Mrs Al Kaylani stated *"It is a very great pleasure to have the Dubai Business Women's Council led by its President, Mrs Raja Al Gurg, joining together with AIWF in a valuable alliance that will, by our joint efforts, create greater awareness of the strategic issues and challenges that affect women and business in the Arab world and applaud and celebrate their successes."*

*AIWF greatly values and appreciates the DBWC commitment to our close working relationship, a significant example of which was the excellent and generous support DBWC gave to the very successful conference, **Young Arab Women Leaders – the Voice of the Future** at the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Dubai on 10 December 2012"*

Mrs Raja Al Gurg, President of Dubai Business Women Council, said, *"The institutionalisation of our partnership with AIWF represents the coming together of two organisations that have a common goal of supporting and empowering women. Over the years, both DBWC and AIWF have initiated several measures to recognise the growing contributions of Arab women towards socio-economic development, and we can now work together on joint efforts that could have a deeper impact."*

Established in 2002, under the umbrella of the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Dubai Business Women's Council is the official representative organisation for business women, both professionals and entrepreneurs, in the Emirate of Dubai.

Building awareness, educating, promoting opportunities and enhancing positive change in the community towards the acceptance of women in business is at the heart of the DBWC's belief in empowering women and motivating them to be productive members of society and the economy.

**AIWF WOULD LIKE TO ACKNOWLEDGE WITH APPRECIATION
THE VALUED SUPPORT OF AIWF GLOBAL ANNUAL PARTNERS**

AIWF Global Corporate Benefactor Partner



AIWF Global Platinum Partners



AIWF Global Diamond Partners



AIWF Institutional Partners



AIWF Global Communications Partner



NEWS FROM AIWF GLOBAL PARTNERS

MEMAC OGILVY, AIWF GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS PARTNER

Memac Ogilvy PR, the region's leaders in the field of communications, shone at the Middle East PR Association (MEPRA) awards ceremony, winning the **"Best Use of Social Media"** award in the Middle East for its work on Qatar Coral's #Ramadangram campaign.

Memac Ogilvy PR Qatar's award winning campaign #Ramadangram was one of the first campaigns in the region to leverage a social networking phenomenon, Instagram, via a campaign designed to increase engagement amongst young Qataris during the holy month of Ramadan.

Edmond Moutran, Chairman and CEO of Memac Ogilvy Middle East and North Africa, said: *"It's always gratifying to have our work acknowledged by industry peers across the Middle East. This Award is a great reflection of the company's talent and its commitment to delivering powerful, effective communication strategies and campaigns. This award reflects the creativity and market insight of our youngest office in the region as it sets a new benchmark for regional digital performance."*

Saada Hammad, Regional PR Director, Memac Ogilvy PR MENA, said *"as clients continue to place social media campaigns at the forefront of their marketing and PR activity, we respond with breakthrough campaigns such as #Ramadangram, achieving truly measurable client results from our newest and youngest office in the region, Qatar. We hope that we continue this momentum in 2013 supporting our clients in award winning campaigns."*

The #Ramadangram campaign was leveraged on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook engaging the residents of Qatar in a 7 days Instagram photography competition. Participants were asked to capture their best Ramadan moments and share them via Qatar Coral's Twitter page (@qatarcoral). Winning images were selected by a panel of judges at Qatar Coral and displayed on the company's Facebook page.

Samer Abboud, Managing Director of Memac Ogilvy & Mather Qatar, said *"we are delighted that our work has been recognised at the prestigious MEPRA awards. This award reflects our team's passion, forward-thinking and in-depth market knowledge. We have great plans for Qatar as we aim to create award winning results for all clients seeking high standards of communication and integrated solutions that drive their business value."*

NEWS FROM AIWF MEMBERS

Arab Women working to support and develop other Arab Women: The Springboard Women's Development Project



Jenny Daisley – 4th from right in front row with Mariam Daher-El Ghaziri - far right of front row with the group of trainers from Palestinian Territories, Libya and Egypt and trainers, who supported the training from Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Lebanon.

Jenny Daisley, a member of AIWF, UK, reports a widening of the Springboard Women's Development project to reach 14,000 women across the Middle East and North Africa. Women report substantial changes in their lives as a result of completing the programme, for example: gaining promotion and leadership roles at work, standing for community elections, participating in constitution building and encouraging less able women to increase their qualifications. All of the materials for the Springboard programme, including a 300 page workbook for participants, have now been translated into Arabic and culturalised for the Arab world.

The project now includes the provision of Springboard programmes in Palestine, Egypt and Libya. Springboard, a collaboration between the British Council MENA, led by Regional Springboard Manager, Mariam Daher-El Ghaziri, and the Springboard Consultancy led by CEO Jenny Daisley, gives Arab women a solid grounding in self development to equip them to take their rightful place in their societies.

Over 100 trainers have been trained and have already reached women in Saudi Arabia, where the project began, Yemen, Oman, UAE, Qatar and Syria (in Syria the trainers have had temporarily to suspend activity).

Jenny Daisley

AIWF Member & CEO Springboard Consultancy



Final workshop - Jenny Daisley with trainers from Palestine, Egypt and Libya

AIWF SHARES A COMMON PURPOSE WITH ITS GLOBAL PARTNERS LEADING INITIATIVES IN KEY SECTORS

The Global Annual Partners that share the AIWF mission and form a network of support for the AIWF Programmes come together each year in Dubai and London to receive an annual report from the Chairman of AIWF, Mrs Haifa Al Kaylani, and to share news and views. We have always valued our Global Partners as being deeply engaged in the Arab region and upholding strong diversity policies but AIWF also feels very proud of the corporate social responsibility and community investment their outreach brings to the countries in which they operate in the Arab region. At our most recent meeting in Dubai on 11 December 2012, an exchange of their current projects revealed that they share a common purpose not only in making this investment but in coming together with AIWF helping to shape the future of the region for women and youth.

We can only feature a few of the programmes run by some of the Global Partners this time but will focus on other Partners, in particular PwC and Petrofac, and more of the social investment projects in subsequent issues of AIWF News.

EDUCATION

PepsiCo, AIWF Global Corporate Benefactor Partner, has just completed the seventh year of its **Tomoooh Scholarship** programme, a key CSR programme to empower Arab youth through education, in partnership with Ajialouna NGO. The scholarship programme has helped 1600 young Lebanese achieve their dreams of attending university with 331 students in Lebanon receiving financial aid in 2012.

At a formal ceremony and dinner at Em Sharif in Achrafieh, attended by the Minister of Information, Dr Walid Daouk as well as officials from PepsiCo, Ajialouna and media, Mr Marwan Istaitie, General Manager for the East Mediterranean and Africa at PepsiCo thanked its many partners who have shown unconditional support to PepsiCo in their commitment and dedication in empowering Arab youth through Tomoooh. Mr Istaitie said *"PepsiCo's primary concern is the student's perseverance in completing their education and focusing on their studies despite the difficult challenges that Lebanon is going through this year."*

The Tomoooh educational programme was initiated in 2003 when Saad Abdul Latif, CEO AMEA, PepsiCo committed \$1m for the educational empowerment of Arab youth and launched in Lebanon in 2006, it was later expanded to Jordan and Egypt and has succeeded in providing support to more than 52,000 beneficiaries and 12,550 students.

DLA Piper, AIWF Global Diamond Partner, has been helping bridge a gap in the curriculum. As only Arabic is taught in the UAE universities, gaining access to experience in international law is integral to the success of UAE law students understanding the wider legal sector and securing jobs with international firms. DLA Piper has been supporting teams from the UAE University Law School to compete in international Mooting Competitions through sponsorship and training.

DLA Piper also works in Saudi Arabia with Helping Hands KSA, an organisation focused on supporting orphans in Riyadh, providing working role models as volunteers to assist children with their school work.

TRAINING AND JOB CREATION

SHELL, AIWF Global Diamond Partner, has enabled more than 131 young Omanis to secure jobs through a social investment programme educating and providing them with the skills needed to enhance their employment and self employment potential. The scheme's unique mechanism is that it identifies relevant job opportunities in the marketplace in collaboration with the prospective employers to train suitable candidates for the jobs. Successful trainees are therefore guaranteed a position after their training course.

On the specialised **Sales Training Programme**, 25 Omani secondary school graduates and diploma holders were included on job training and 50% of the places on this programme were for candidates coming from social security families. The students were placed in jobs immediately after graduation.

Under the **Health & Safety Executive Advisers Programme**, Shell supported a specialised Occupational, Safety & Health Technician programme for 15 Omani secondary school graduates and after graduating the students took up jobs as professional HSE technicians.

Based on Shell's belief in creating equal opportunity for young physically challenged unemployed nationals, Shell supported 23 hearing impaired Omanis to be trained in a **Cashiers Programme**. This was a unique programme and carried out for the first time with the students taking up jobs as cashiers after graduating.

A **Carpentry Programme** for hearing impaired graduates was supported by Shell and targeted young unemployed physically challenged Omanis. The training was for 15 hearing impaired Omanis who had left school from grade 6 and above and stayed without further education for many years.

The Sales, HSE and Carpentry programmes were carried out in collaboration with the Oman Society for Petroleum Services (OPAL) and the Technical & Administrative Training Institute. The Arabian Training Centre joined OPAL in supporting the Cashiers Programme.

In collaboration with the Oman Society for Petroleum Services (OPAL) and the Arabian Training Centre, Shell funded the training of 28 diploma graduates in an **AutoCAD Programme**. 50% of the places in the programme were allocated for candidates coming from social security families and job opportunities were secured beforehand in different leading organisations.

As guided by His Majesty's directives on linking development of projects with local communities and focusing on citizens as the core target of development **Shell**, in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Development and Sultan Qaboos University, supported **the training of 25 ladies from different branches of Al Wafa Social Volunteer Centres**. There are 23 centres around the Sultanate, which serve more than 2200 disabled children.

A special training programme was tailored by Sultan Qaboos University to fit the needs of the academic skills of the volunteers to be qualified to deal with special needs children. The training will take place at Sultan Qaboos University for 2

academic years, providing them with the certification for work with these children.

DLA Piper's Initiative last year called '**Break into Law**' is designed to support under-represented groups and to remove the barriers against entering into the legal profession. The legal sector does not include sufficient local talent and with the degree of joblessness in the region, in particular amongst Arab women, DLA Piper is working to encourage and support local youth. In the case of Saudi Arabia their initiative aimed to help women entering the legal profession. Through relationships with local universities, DLA Piper lawyers give career presentations to students to help them to consider the opportunities available in the legal profession and provide internships. This initiative in Saudi Arabia has been very successful and being one of the few international law firms, DLA is proud to employ three full-time women legal consultants out of eight. Furthermore, the female law consultants actively promote the legal profession at King Saud and Prince Sultan University by speaking to women about their aspirations and career paths.

To help support young Arab law students to succeed and have access to international law, DLA Piper also runs a two week work experience programme in their Abu Dhabi and Dubai offices.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

In the MENA region, Shell focuses on entrepreneurship, human capital and environment, but it varies from country to country working with local partners. Of note is the partnership with the UK FCO Arab Partnership Fund which set up a fund for investing in small businesses in Jordan, co-funded by the Shell Foundation and a finance company, GroFin. Substantial loans, together with development, advice and support, are given to young people with solid business plans. The initiative in Jordan is due to be repeated in Basra, Iraq.

ROAD SAFETY

Road Safety has always been a major initiative with **SHELL** who has a partnership with the Global Road Safety Initiative (GRSI) which aims to improve road safety in targeted developing countries, where they work with international agencies, companies and governments on practical projects to reduce road accidents. In 2010, with the GRSP and full support with former AIWF Global Partners, General Motors, they supported the launch of a regional drive urging the use of seat belts and child restraints helped by Formula 1 racing driver, Michael Schumacher.

Shell Road Safety Awards, which include workshops and seminars focused on practical problems, are part of the competition which is run throughout private and public schools in Oman.

Road Safety and particularly the safety of its employees is a shared concern among the AIWF Partners and there will be future exchanges on what each company is doing to try to combat this danger.

WATER

DLA Piper's common purpose programme brought together

four companies from four countries in the West with four companies from four countries in the Middle East to address the problem of water security and how the initiative brought different cultures together to solve a common problem. DLA Piper is pleased to be involved in this Common Purpose Inaugural Itijah Venture with other AIWF Global Partners, PwC and Shell.

PepsiCo has shared information about the upcoming water project that PepsiCo is undertaking in Jordan to replenish reservoirs as well as building a new reservoir in Egypt. PepsiCo will be stepping up its programmes in the water sector in 2015 after re-evaluating the current projects and how best it can increase and sustain the resource across the MENA region. Congratulations have been offered to PepsiCo in winning the Stockholm Industry Water Award in August 2012 which recognised PepsiCo for its global initiative in terms of water and sustainable agriculture. Water is also an important topic for most companies and this may be one of the topics together with the other important themes of energy and food security seen as current and future key areas of concern to the region which could be the agenda of a future AIWF event.

HEALTH & WELFARE

PepsiCo announced the launch of its Learning Program at the Children Cancer Center of Lebanon (CCCL), an affiliate of St Jude Children Research Hospital. The arts and music programme will ensure that more than 250 children suffering from chronic illnesses will gain access to a fully equipped facility situated within the hospital, with the support of a team of specialised instructors to make sure they maximise the potential of these children. This programme, along with its team of instructors, will be running for many years to come.

Successful consumer promotion initiatives that PepsiCo had undertaken to contribute to the Egyptian food bank and similarly one in Saudi Arabia called *Compete to Feed* had allowed the proceeds to be directed into the World Food Programme.

Pfizer, AIWF Global Platinum Partner, has been active in partnering with NGOs in Egypt particularly in bringing knowledge of arthritis to local communities. Arthritis is a chronic disease, widely disregarded and requires lifelong treatment for which most people cannot afford to pay. Funding promotion campaigns has been very successful in raising awareness and similar partnerships were to be launched in other 'out of pocket' countries in the region.

Pfizer has also been involved in many smoking cessation campaigns, diabetes awareness around World Diabetes Day and the abolishment of psoriasis through working with dermatologists in the region and setting up self help groups.

MENTORING

PepsiCo remains heavily involved with the PlaNet organisation in the Middle East and plans were being discussed for a specific partnership on employee engagement and micro finance in 2013 which would involve PepsiCo employees at different levels mentoring those who were participating in the PlanNet finance programmes.

There are tentative plans for expanding the two previous PepsiCo Youth Forums held in the UAE into a regional event. A Youth Conference was planned for March 2013 in either Jordan or Dubai, in partnership with the private sector and civil society. The general theme of the conference would be social responsibility with focus on the individuals to create a more sustainable and healthy future for their communities and social entrepreneurship focussed on an older youth group that have a tested plan that requires mentorship. Attendance was free and invitations would be sent through the social media network with successful participants being screened and interviewed to gain sponsorship to attend.

THE (CORPORATE GOVERNANCE) JOURNEY HAS JUST BEGUN!

Hawkamah Institute for Corporate Governance, AIWF Institutional Partner, has been working with regulators, companies, boards, families, academics, students and other institutions to frame the regional discourse on corporate governance within the context of the region's business culture, traditions, and norms.

Hawkamah's approach to build regionally sensitive solutions to corporate governance issues is important because the nature of the ownership (predominantly family- and state-owned or companies that have dominant shareholders), structure (a good number of the companies have holding and subsidiary structures), and laws and codes (most of the countries have company laws that need to be modernised to better reflect the development of companies and economies) present big challenges in their implementation.

Corporate governance frameworks are typically driven by capital market regulations, but the reality is that the regional capital markets have not sufficiently achieved the depth and breadth that reflect regional economies nor have the regional capital markets attracted the necessary institutional investors for the markets to reach the required level of sophistication.

In the meantime, there is growing acceptance among business and political leaders that introducing corporate governance mechanisms and discipline is important for the region's economic and financial sustainability. With this momentum, Hawkamah has sought to advance the discussions on corporate governance.

Regulatory Frameworks

Over the past few years, most of the countries in the MENA and GCC have introduced corporate governance codes, typically driven by capital market regulators or relevant ministries. Most of these codes have generally taken on a "comply-or-explain" approach coming from the recognition that corporate governance frameworks are reasonably new to the region and part of the investment in the mindset change is to sensitise companies to a transparency and disclosure discipline that should be reviewed by regulators. The implementation challenges include the quality of corporate governance disclosures, insufficient regulatory actions against non-compliant companies, and ensuring an ongoing dialogue between the companies and regulators to push corporate governance standards forward.

Board Effectiveness

Because of the nature of ownership of many companies in the region, board appointments have not necessarily been transparent and board accountability has not been fully developed. The introduction of the codes has been a positive step towards articulating the elevated expectations on boards and as such boards and directors have started looking at their individual and collective competencies and have been more serious in fulfilling their fiduciary obligations to their companies. Board evaluations have been slowly accepted and implemented, and some boards are looking to appoint truly independent, non-executive directors. Board diversity and ensuring that women have a seat at the decision making table have slowly been introduced from the perspective that women often times provide the voice of independence in the boardrooms.

Communicating Impact to Stakeholders

Beyond financial reporting, there has been growing recognition among various stakeholders such as regulators, investors, and others that companies should also disclose information on its environmental, social and governance (ESG) impact. A movement towards greater accountability by companies that have started globally such as the Global Reporting Initiative, integrated reporting, etc is having a ripple effect in the region which is resulting in better consciousness by companies, particularly the banks and those listed in the stock exchanges, of effectively communicating to their stakeholders. Hawkamah's ESG index, developed with S&P Dow Jones, is showing significant outperformance by those companies that disclose their ESG against their peers.

Conclusion

These are just some of the positive developments to corporate governance in the region. Clearly Hawkamah and its partners, including the AIWF, will still have a full plate in the coming years in bridging the corporate governance gap. Just as the region is going through its corporate governance journey, Hawkamah is looking forward to its own institutional journey with AIWF in further influencing corporate governance discussions in the region.

Nick Nadal

Head of Hawkamah Institute for Corporate Governance

HOW TO JOIN AIWF

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UNITED NATIONS 57TH COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN REACHES HISTORIC AGREEMENT IN MARCH 2013 ON ITS PRIORITY THEME

**The elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls
which is universally recognised as a barrier to women's equality and empowerment**

Addressing Violence against Women and Girls is central to achieving Equality, Development and Peace

*[Beijing Platform for Action, adopted at
the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995]*

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW or UNSCW), a functional commission of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) meets in March each year, normally around International Women's Day on 8th March. Representatives of Member States gather at United Nations Headquarters in New York to evaluate progress, identify challenges, set global standards and formulate policies to promote gender equality and the advancement of women worldwide. The Commission's priority theme for its 57th session, March 2013 was announced as the **elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls**.

After two weeks of difficult negotiations involving the 131 states in attendance, the agreed conclusions document, adopted on the final day, Friday 15 March this year, recorded an historic agreement on eliminating violence against women and girls. Once adopted, governments are called upon to ratify and implement these agreed conclusions which form the basis of global, national and local advocacy.

Gender Equality must become a Lived Reality

[Michelle Bachelet, Executive Director, UN Women]

"Violence against women is a universal problem that requires, and has now received, a universal response.

By adopting this document, governments have made clear that discrimination and violence against women and girls has no place in the 21st century. They have reaffirmed their commitment and responsibility to undertake concrete action to end violence against women and girls and promote and protect women's human rights and fundamental freedoms," said **UN Women Executive Director** and former President of Chile, **Michelle Bachelet** of UN Women, the **United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women** which was the new UN organisation set up in 2010, replacing **UNIFEM**, dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women.

UN Secretary-General, Ban-Ki Moon, welcomed the agreed conclusions of the fifty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women, all of which had his full support.

The issue of violence against women and children is not yet sufficiently addressed in the Arab world...with a growing gap of knowledge and data regarding this subject, according to the SALMA Campaign which calls for increased gender equality and improved social and legal status for women

in the Arab world, focusing on Egypt, Jordan and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

Women's and children's rights are of primary importance to Her Majesty Queen Rania of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. In particular, Her Majesty has focused her energy on the topics of domestic violence, and the protection of women and children against abuse. She serves as the head of the national Early Childhood Development and Family Safety Council, and she is a member of the UNICEF Global Leadership Initiative, which focuses on children's rights.

The benchmark for a unified strategy for safeguarding families from domestic violence was set by family experts and sociologists from the Arab world in 2009 when the second Arab Regional Conference for Family Protection took place in Jordan under the Patronage of Her Majesty Queen Rania, in her role as Chairperson of the National Council for Family Affairs (NCFA).

**...one of the most pervasive human rights
violations in the world, violence against
women and girls, is both endemic and
epidemic. It limits self-esteem, life chances,
economic opportunity and development.**

[Former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan]

REDUCING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

"Domestic Violence occurs across the globe, affecting millions of people across society, irrespective of economic status. No country or community is untouched. The social and economic costs are enormous." - Founder & Patron of EDV Global Foundation, the Rt Hon Baroness Scotland, QC.

21 March marked the beginning of the 6 month countdown to Peace Day - 21 September. The **'Reducing Domestic Violence'** Coalition, established in 2012 by the non-profit organisation **Peace One Day** with lead partner the **Eliminate Domestic Violence Global Foundation**, aims to bring issues surrounding domestic violence to the fore and generate a vast amount of activity on Peace Day.

Bringing together experts and commentators in the field, Peace One Day aims to discuss key points around a number of important issues, such as:

- How action can be manifested on Peace One Day to raise awareness of key issues surrounding domestic violence.
- How a coalition can bring organisations together, unifying their message to achieve greater impact around domestic violence worldwide.
- How Peace One Day's 2013 theme: Who Will You Make Peace With? can mobilise action towards reducing domestic violence.