



AIWF NEWS

Arab International Women's Forum

المنتدى العربي الدولي للمرأة

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Acting Chairman's Message

In January, the Arab International Women's Forum proudly announced that Founder Chairman Haifa Al Kaylani had been invited to join the Harvard Advanced Leadership Initiative as a 2017 Fellow.

As Acting Chairman and on behalf of the Board of AIWF, it is my great pleasure to share with you the March 2017 AIWF Newsletter. This is our first publication in a year about which we are especially excited. Arising out of established and valued partnerships as well as new international collaborations, our 2017 program is in direct response to evolving opportunities and challenges for women and young people in the MENA region.

Indeed, the theme for International Women's Day on 08 March 2017 is **'Women in the Changing World of Work: Planet 50-50 by 2030'**. This theme recognizes that the working world is changing and that there are significant implications, opportunities and challenges ahead for women across the globe. As UN Women notes, "On the one hand, we have globalization, technological and digital revolution and the opportunities they bring, and on the other hand, the growing informality of labour, unstable livelihoods and incomes, new fiscal and trade policies and environmental impacts – all of which must be addressed in the context of women's economic empowerment."

In the 16 years since AIWF was founded by Haifa Al Kaylani in London in 2001, AIWF has worked tirelessly with governments, the private sector, civil society, academia and the media to address significant economic and societal developments in the region and advocate for the advancement of gender parity and the empowerment of women in all spheres. Haifa's Fellowship of the Advanced Leadership Initiative Fellowship at Harvard in 2017 represents a major milestone for AIWF as an organisation. This is also a unique opportunity to explore new dimensions and perspectives, address emerging challenges in a global

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT



Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani, Founder Chairman of the Arab International Women's Forum and Fellow, Harvard Advanced Leadership Initiative

It is with great pride that the Board of the Arab International Women's Forum announces that **Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani**, AIWF Founder Chairman, joins Harvard University as a Fellow of the Harvard Advanced Leadership Programme in 2017. Mrs Al Kaylani has been invited to join 45 global leaders selected for an intensive, multi-disciplinary program and yearlong Fellowship at Harvard to solve significant social problems.

Read more on page 3

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

AIWF Morocco Business & Networking Trip

AIWF Special Delegation Visit to Morocco

Sunday 16 April – Friday 21 April 2017

Morocco

AIWF 9th Young Arab Women Leaders Conference

9th edition of the Young Arab Women Leaders initiative and AIWF's first ever conference in Morocco

Tuesday 18 April 2017

Fez, Morocco



Rania Rizk, Senior Vice President & General Counsel AMEA at PepsiCo and Acting Chairman, Arab International Women's Forum, with Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani, Founder Chairman, Arab International Women's Forum and Fellow, Harvard Advanced Leadership Initiative

context, and engage with new international contacts towards greater cross-cultural collaboration and a peaceful and prosperous future for women in the MENA region and beyond.

I am looking forward to 2017. Inspired by our Founder Chairman, the Board of Directors of AIWF is committed to developing new opportunities, further expanding the reach and impact of AIWF, and enriching our unique business and networking offerings to Arab women not only in the MENA countries but also in Europe, the US and Asia. Among many other key events, we are particularly excited about taking forward the highly successful *Young Arab Women Leaders* initiative which this year celebrates its 5th anniversary since the inaugural conference of the series was held.

This year, with the valued partnership and support of the AIWF Board, Global Partners, members and our many key alliances in the Arab and international business and academic communities, AIWF will maintain focus on bringing our partners in the public, private and civil sectors together to support education, leadership training, capacity building and self-development for women and youth in all sectors and spheres; to mainstream gender neutral business policies; create a supportive and sustainable environment that enables women entrepreneurs and business leaders; and to promote the enhanced participation of Arab women in public life, in parliament, the judiciary and the legal profession.

The Board of the Arab International Women's Forum joins me in thanking you all for your invaluable support of our organisation in the year ahead. We are all greatly looking forward to launching the 2017 program in April through the Special Delegation Visit to Morocco and the 9th *Young Arab Women Leaders* conference, and to continuing all valuable collaborations throughout the year with our partners, members and key contacts around the world in honour of our core mission for women in the Arab region and beyond, ***Building Bridges, Building Business.***

Rania Rizk
Acting Chairman
Arab International Women's Forum

Rania Rizk

*Senior Vice President & General Counsel
PepsiCo, Asia, Middle East & North Africa*

Rania Rizk is Senior Vice President and General Counsel for PepsiCo's, Asia, Middle East & North Africa (AMENA) Sector. In this role, Ms. Rizk sits on the Executive Committee of the AMENA Sector and is responsible for all legal aspects of PepsiCo's vast portfolio of food, beverage and nutrition businesses across the AMENA sector. Prior to this role she was the Vice President and Chief Legal Counsel for Middle East & Africa (MEA) region at PepsiCo.

Personally committed to functional excellence and the role of legal as gatekeeper and business partner, Ms. Rizk leads a strong and talented team of lawyers and paralegals based in twelve countries across the AMENA sector. She has played a pivotal role in shaping the Performance with Purpose strategy for PepsiCo in the region, and has been executive sponsor of many diversity & inclusion initiatives.

Prior to joining PepsiCo, Ms. Rizk was in private practice in the US and Egypt from 1996 to 2001. She headed Legal Services for Andersen and Ernst & Young in the Middle East from 2001-2005, and was a Visiting Lecturer at Cairo University Faculty of Law from 2003-2005.

Ms. Rizk is a member of the Dubai Businesswomen's Council, member and Acting Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Arab International Women's Forum (AIWF) and a former member of the board of the American Business Council in Dubai.

She holds a Juris Doctor (JD) degree with specialization in International Business Transactions from George Mason University School of Law (1996) and a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree in International Relations from Boston University.

AIWF Founder Chairman Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani joins Harvard University as a Fellow of the Advanced Leadership Initiative



Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani, Founder Chairman AIWF and Fellow, Harvard Advanced Leadership Initiative, with Rania Rizk, Senior Vice President and General Counsel for PepsiCo, Asia, Middle East & North Africa (AMENA) and Acting Chairman, Arab International Women's Forum

It is with great pride that the Board of the Arab International Women's Forum announces that Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani, AIWF Founder Chairman, joins Harvard University as a Fellow of the Harvard Advanced Leadership Programme in 2017. Mrs Al Kaylani has been invited to join 45 global leaders selected for an intensive, multi-disciplinary program and yearlong Fellowship at Harvard to solve significant social problems.

Harvard's Advanced Leadership Initiative, conceived by Professors **Rosabeth Moss Kanter**, **Rakesh Khurana**, and **Nitin Nohria** and launched in 2009, is an exciting new 'third stage' in higher education designed to prepare experienced global leaders to take on new challenges in the social sector and carry the impact made in their careers forward towards even greater societal good. ALI Fellows participate in a rigorous core course, field experiences and intensive deep dives on social issues including health, environment, and education.

Supported by Faculty from Harvard's Schools of Business, Education, Government, Law, Medicine and Public Health, ALI aims to tap into the experiences of a socially conscious generation of leaders, to help 'redirect and broaden their skills to fill critical leadership gaps in solving major social issues'. The Fellowship culminates in a capstone event where ALI Fellows are invited to present their plan to make a lasting difference in the world. Following the programme year, fellows join the ALI Coalition, a group dedicated to making ongoing social progress and impact across a broad range of sectors and development spheres.

This year's selected ALI Fellows form the 9th cohort of the programme, and come from diverse sectors and backgrounds with outstanding records of achievement and accomplishment. Mrs Al Kaylani said, "It is indeed a great privilege to have been nominated and subsequently invited to join Harvard as a Fellow of the Advanced Leadership Initiative for this year. Having successfully led AIWF since its inception in London in 2001, I am delighted on a personal level to be taking the time to undertake this important Fellowship and to have this tremendous

opportunity to carry forward on a global level the mission I care deeply about and to which I have devoted over three decades of my life – economic development through the empowerment and advancement of Arab women and youth and by advocating job creation, entrepreneurship, education and economic empowerment, not only in the MENA region but internationally."

To lead AIWF through the exciting year ahead as she undertakes this important Fellowship at Harvard, Haifa Al Kaylani is delighted to share with all AIWF Partners, Members, Friends and Supporters that the Board of the Arab International Women's Forum has unanimously welcomed **Rania Rizk**, AIWF Board Member and Senior Vice President & General Counsel AMEA at PepsiCo, as Acting Chairman effective January 2017. Ms Rizk is a distinguished senior executive and passionate advocate for empowerment, and she has been a key contributor to advancing women's empowerment as part of PepsiCo's *Performance with Purpose* initiative in Asia and the Middle East.

Ms Rizk has been the steward of PepsiCo's partnership with AIWF for several years and a member of AIWF's Board of Directors since 2013. In her leadership capacity with AIWF, Ms Rizk has been a driving force behind enhancing governance and the adoption of institutional best practices. Commenting on the year ahead, Ms Rizk said, "I am truly humbled and honoured by the confidence placed in me by our esteemed AIWF Chairman and the members of the Board. I look forward to continuing the journey with the AIWF team and the Board in 2017 to deliver a highly impactful program."

The AIWF Board and Organisation intends to honour Mrs Al Kaylani's Fellowship by building on the successes of the past decade and a half with a valuable Annual Programme of events and initiatives in 2017, among these, taking forward the highly successful *Young Arab Women Leaders* initiative which celebrates its 5th Anniversary in 2017. Key AIWF events for 2017 will be announced regularly throughout the year on the AIWF website.

"It is indeed a great privilege to have been nominated and subsequently invited to join Harvard as a Fellow of the Advanced Leadership Initiative for this year. Having successfully led AIWF since its inception in London in 2001, I am delighted on a personal level to be taking the time to undertake this important Fellowship and to have this tremendous opportunity to carry forward on a global level the mission I care deeply about and to which I have devoted over three decades of my life."

Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani, Founder Chairman, Arab International Women's Forum and Fellow, Harvard Advanced Leadership Initiative

Navigating the future in the age of innovation: AIWF Founder Chairman delivers keynote address at Harvard Project for Asian and International Relations Annual Conference in Cambridge, MA



Haifa Al Kaylani, speaking at the 26th Annual Conference of the Harvard Project for Asian and International Relations.

AIWF Founder Chairman **Haifa Al Kaylani**, Founder Chairman of the Arab International Women's Forum and Fellow, Harvard Advanced Leadership Initiative, was invited to deliver a keynote address at Harvard University's **Harvard Project for Asian and International Relations (HPAIR) Annual Conference** on 19 February 2017 in Cambridge, MA, titled *Navigating the future in the age of innovation*.

The Harvard Project for Asian and International Relations is a partnership between the students and faculty of Harvard University, offering a sustained academic program and a forum of exchange to facilitate discussion of the most important economic, political, and social issues relevant to the Asia-Pacific region. Since 1992, HPAIR has organised Harvard University's largest annual student conferences on the Asia-Pacific region, attracting over 300 students from 57 different countries and from top universities around the world who convene at Harvard to share cultures and ideas and collaborate on the toughest current issues plaguing Asia and the international world.

Now in its 26th year, the HPAIR Conference at Harvard has hosted prominent speakers over the years including former Prime Minister of Australia **Kevin Rudd**, former President of the Republic of Korea and Nobel Peace Prize Laureate **Kim Dae-Jung**, former President of Singapore **SR Nathan**, **Philip Murphy**, Former President of Goldman Sachs Asia, **Frank Jürgen Richter**, Former Director of the World Economic Forum, and **Ban Ki-Moon**, Secretary-General of the United Nations.

In 2017, the 26th HPAIR Harvard Conference at Harvard took place on 17-20 February at Harvard University's Geological Lecture Hall in the Harvard Geological Museum. AIWF Founder Chairman Haifa Al Kaylani, who is at Harvard in 2017 as a Fellow of the Advanced Leadership Initiative, was invited to contribute as a keynote speaker in recognition of her wide-ranging passion for some of today's most critical global issues including the integration of women in various sectors of society.

In her address, titled *Navigating the future for young Arab women in the age of innovation*, Mrs Al Kaylani briefed Harvard student delegates on the role and achievements of the Arab International Women's Forum since its founding in 2001. She highlighted the remarkable accomplishments of Arab women leaders who have, in the last two decades especially, laid down important groundwork to level the playing field and empower the next generation of young women leaders in the region.

She talked about progress in education as one of the Arab world's most important success stories. Largely due to the strong investment of Arab governments in education across the region (above 5.3% of GDP), the MENA region has in recent decades 'quadrupled the average level of schooling since 1960, halved illiteracy since 1980 and achieved almost complete gender parity for primary education', according to the World Bank. Throughout the Arab region, the primary enrolment rate is currently at 84.5%, close to the world average of 89%, with many countries close to achieving universal primary enrolment. At higher and advanced education level, in almost every MENA country, women are graduating from university in far greater numbers than men and in subjects such as computer science, engineering and law, in what the World Bank has called a 'reverse gender gap'. In some countries, the ratio of women to men studying STEM subjects at university is 2:1, and in most Gulf States, around 60% of university graduates overall are women.

Mrs Al Kaylani talked about women's successes in the professions, in business and in entrepreneurship, with women advancing rapidly in professions previously restricted to men, including diplomacy, law, finance, medicine, aviation, and STEM careers, and challenging gender bias in nearly every sector and sphere. More Arab women than at any other time in history, she said, are playing prominent roles on corporate boards and in executive leadership throughout the MENA region, citing the very recent example of **Sarah Al Suhaimi's** groundbreaking appointment in Saudi Arabia to lead the Saudi Arabian stock exchange, Tadawul.



Delegates of the 27th Annual Conference of the Harvard Project for Asian and International Relations

She also told the Harvard student delegation about the region's many rising stars in tech entrepreneurship who are launching innovative platforms that are redefining traditional business models and products in the Arab world. "With internet users in the Arab World tipped to reach over half a billion consumers by 2018," she said, "internet retail and the app economy in the MENA region is clearly set for staggering growth – representing a remarkable opportunity for women entrepreneurs, who dominate in service, retail and tech innovation."

Mrs Al Kaylani also discussed the gains that women have made in politics and public life, stating: "We are delighted to see women becoming more deeply involved in government in the Arab world, and to note that the overall rate of parliamentary participation of women in the Arab States is, as of January 2017, at 18% (up from 13% in 2012 and 9% in 2010)." She cited as examples of women in public life that AIWF Founder Board Member **Sheikha Lubna Al Qassimi**, the first woman to hold a ministerial position in the UAE, is currently the Minister of State for Tolerance and was previously the Minister of State for International Cooperation and Minister of Economic and Planning of the United Arab Emirates; and the very recent appointments of **Nadia Saleh** as Governor of Beheira, which The New York Times reported on as a 'significant contrast to Egypt's tradition of naming [male] military or police as governors', and of **Ambassador Lana Nusseibeh**, Permanent Representative of the UAE to the UN, to the Presidency of the UN Women Executive Board for 2017.

Mrs Al Kaylani acknowledged that although unprecedented progress had been made, there was still a long way to go towards the achievement of true gender parity both in the Arab region and in many other regions in the world, and called for more to be done to ensure that women are equipped and empowered with the leadership skills to successfully and confidently compete in the increasingly global and interconnected marketplace.

Mrs Al Kaylani concluded by talking about her role as a member of the Harvard Women's Leadership Board (WLB), where she has been engaged on women's issues since 2004 having been invited as one of the first Arabs

to join the WLB. The Members of the Harvard Women's Leadership Board (WLB) endorse and support the work of Harvard's Women and Public Policy Program (WAPPP), a research centre of Harvard Kennedy School that provides women leaders with the skills and tools to successfully navigate the business world and public life, drawing on Harvard University's unparalleled faculty expertise and its global reach to impact thinking and opportunities for collaboration. The programme trains today's leaders and prepares them as the next generation of leaders to advance a more gender equal environment for women, helping them develop the necessary skills and tools to successfully navigate the universal challenges of women's leadership. WAPPP programmes draw from and are deeply enriched by engagement with Harvard's unparalleled faculty expertise, the university's global reach and the outstanding talent pool of Harvard students and Fellows.

Her work as Founder Chairman of AIWF and a Member of the Harvard Women's Leadership Board, she explained, had now culminated in her spending a year at Harvard University in 2017 as a Fellow of the Advanced Leadership Initiative. This was the first conference during her year at Harvard that Mrs Al Kaylani has been invited to address. She was delighted after her keynote to network with a number of young leaders who expressed how much they had learnt about women in the Arab world through her keynote presentation and to commend her work and that of the Arab International Women's Forum.



Delegates of the 27th Annual Conference of the Harvard Project for Asian and International Relations

AIWF is proud to have had this opportunity to support the important work of the Harvard Project for Asian and International Relations through Mrs Al Kaylani's participation in this Harvard conference, the first of what will undoubtedly be many such engagements in the year ahead. AIWF looks forward to working closely in 2017 and beyond with HPAIR and other leading Harvard academic programmes to bring rising young Arab and international business leaders together and facilitate further discussion on the economic, political and social issues that impact young leaders globally.

AIWF to organise a unique business and networking delegation to Morocco to facilitate executive networking and business development opportunities

Following the highly successful AIWF Special Visit to Italy in March 2016, and further to an exciting invitation received from the MEC Maghreb Invest Team in the UK, AIWF is now actively engaged in planning a second **AIWF Special Visit** which will provide a unique 5-day networking and business exchange opportunity in Morocco. The trip will take place from Sunday 16 April to Friday 21 April 2017, and provides AIWF with an opportunity to bring 40 business women leaders from the UK, Europe and the Arab world together with business women leaders in Morocco.

The itinerary for the AIWF Special Visit will include a number of exclusive business visits, exciting cultural experiences, B2B meetings and VIP attendance at key Moroccan exhibitions and conferences on agribusiness and education, as well as a special invitation for delegates to attend AIWF's 9th *Young Arab Women Leaders* Conference which has been scheduled to overlap with the Special Visit and will take place at the Marriott Hotel Jnan Palace in Fez on Tuesday 18 April 2017.

Similar to the highly successful visit to Italy last year, this delegation to Morocco provides women business leaders and executives with unique opportunities to meet and interact with high-level Moroccan counterparts, and to connect with distinguished guests from government and the diplomatic service, other leading members of the business community, and leading figures from the Arab, European and international community.

AIWF is delighted to be working with all our AIWF Global Partners on this special occasion, and warmly acknowledges and greatly appreciates the full and invaluable support of the MEC Maghreb Invest Team in organising the itinerary for the AIWF Special Visit to Morocco.

AIWF announces 9th Young Arab Women Leaders Conference to take place in Fez, Morocco, in April 2017 in continued partnership with PwC

The Acting Chairman and Board of the Arab International Women's Forum are delighted to announce that AIWF will be hosting its 9th conference of the **Young Arab Women Leaders: The Voice of the Future** series in Fez, Morocco, on 17-18 April 2017.



Delegates at the 8th Young Arab Women Leaders event held in October 2016 in Kuwait

The YAWL conference in Morocco follows on from the phenomenal success of inaugural events in Amman, Beirut and Dubai in 2012, Palestine in 2013, London in 2011 and 2014, Qatar in 2015, and Kuwait in 2016. AIWF is especially proud to be hosting its first ever conference in Morocco as part of the *Young Arab Women Leaders* series which is designed to assist young women entrepreneurs to realise and optimise their full personal and business potential.

The session programming for this series has been carefully developed with the involvement of a number of young women leaders and entrepreneurs from the region, and all participants are asked in a highly interactive and supportive environment to share their experiences, best practices and findings on promoting the achievements and developing the capacity of young women in business in the wider Arab world.

AIWF is delighted to be working in continued partnership with Global Partner PwC and all AIWF Global Partners on this occasion, and recognises and appreciates their longstanding support and dedication to this initiative which has contributed greatly to its success. AIWF looks forward to celebrating the 5th Anniversary of *Young Arab Women Leaders* in 2017 and through this initiative, to restating its commitment to empowering the next generation of young women entrepreneurs to break new ground in business and in public life.

For further information on the AIWF Special Visit to Morocco (16-21 April 2017) or the forthcoming 9th Young Arab Women Leaders conference on 18 April 2017, please contact the AIWF Office.

AIWF represented at Arab Women Organisation 6th Annual Conference in Cairo in November 2016 on the role of women in the Arab States and paths to reform and change

Marianne Abou El Kheir, AIWF Member, Global Partner and Sub-Saharan Africa Director at Janssen, Pharmaceutical Companies of Johnson & Johnson Sub-Saharan and Africa Region



The Arab Women Organisation 6th Annual Conference in Cairo, December 2016

Following the kind invitation extended to the Arab International Women's Forum by **Minister Mervat Tallawy**, Director General of the Arab Women Organisation (AWO), a regional intergovernmental organisation affiliated with the League of Arab States, I had the privilege to attend as an AIWF Global Partner and on behalf of AIWF the **6th Annual Conference of the Arab Women Organization** on 13 – 14 December 2016 in Cairo, titled '*The role of women in the Arab countries and paths of reform and change*', held under the auspices of **HE Ms Ronak Abdelwahed**, Iraq's First Lady and the Current President of AWO.

It was my pleasure to participate in the Conference proceedings, which included a round table to discuss the leading role of businesswomen in achieving economic empowerment for women. I also listened to the testimonies and experiences of prominent women in decision-making positions, and participated in a cultural salon where the new roles and current challenges of Arab women was discussed. Participants in the conference stressed the need to focus and work on activating the role of women leaders within the reformation and change processes and support the development of new leadership roles for Arab women to support change and political reform, to preserve social cohesion against political conflict, protect national security and support Arab solidarity.

Conference speakers and delegates were in agreement that all involved parties including state institutions, the private sector, media, religious figures, research and academic institutions, and civil society should work together to remove obstacles faced by women in order to achieve solidarity and empowerment for women in the Arab region. Accordingly, the conference deliberated and agreed on recommendations for activating the role of women in

decision-making positions, national economy development, and fields of resisting violence and terrorism, including the urgency of integrating women's demands within the constitutional and legal context. Leading speakers from Egypt and around the MENA region discussed the importance of enhancing women's representation within the legislative, executive and judiciary authorities, and the urgent need to eliminate cultural obstacles by correcting erroneous stereotypes of women in Arab society and culture.

It is critical to encourage women's participation in voluntary work, civil society, and representation in municipalities and labour unions, in support of a greater leadership presence and role for Arab women, and to promote awareness in the community about the importance of investing in education, health and the employment and skills development of women and girls. In this light, it was recommended that governments should adopt a package of policies that empower women and their integration in the development process, in particular establishing financial systems that provide small loans and access to capital for women-owned businesses.

It was also agreed that the Arab Women's Organization in collaboration with the African Development Bank is to develop a guide to women's entrepreneurship, and it was emphasised and encouraged that all actors should work collaboratively and in a sustainable way to develop women's skills, activating their capabilities, supporting the self-learning process by designing and implementing policies to protect women working in the informal sector, opposing aggressive religious discourse with constructive dialogue, and working to expand and deepen the awareness of the human rights of women to reduce violence towards them.



The Arab Women Organisation 6th Annual Conference in Cairo, December 2016

AIWF commends the Arab Women Organisation for all its invaluable work under the leadership of Director General **Minister Mervat Tallawy** as one of the world's leading organisations that supports and enhances the role of women in the Arab world.

AIWF organises unique Board & Members' Social in partnership with Bicester Village and Value Retail Management



Bicester Village, photo courtesy of Value Retail Management

Haifa Al Kaylani, Founder Chairman of the Arab International Women's Forum, and **Desiree Bollier**, Chair of Value Retail Management, were delighted to co-host a unique, unparalleled shopping experience at Bicester Village exclusively for AIWF Board and Members on 02 December 2016. The day included an exclusive selection of bespoke services such as chauffeured transfers to and from central London, a brunch reception upon arrival, VIP Cards offering additional savings, exclusive use of the hands-free shopping and Personal Shopper services, canapes and unlimited access to the Bicester Village VIP Lounge.

Chantal Khoueiry, Value Retail Management's Chief Culture Officer, said: "For many years, the 11 Chic Outlet Shopping® Villages in Europe and China by Value Retail have enjoyed an enduring relationship with Arab communities in all countries where our Villages reside, be that through tourism or domestic visitation. We were delighted to welcome the AIWF delegation to Bicester Village as we have shared values and particularly close to our hearts is our focus on nurturing young and female executive talent."

Representative of this was Bicester Villages' recent sponsorship of the *Arab Women of the Year Awards* in



Brides Do Good, a social enterprise founded by Chantal Khoueiry that aims to reduce and prevent child marriage, raised £18,592.23 over ten days through its first pop-up boutique at Bicester Village

2016, celebrating the achievements and excellence of Arab women. In February 2017, the iconic Bicester Village was the venue for the first ever pop-up boutique of social enterprise *Brides Do Good*, founded by Chantal Khoueiry to combat child marriage, which raised £18,592.23 over ten days for charity partners *Plan International* and *Too Young to Wed*. Funds raised through the Bicester Village boutique will be used to help reduce and prevent child marriage in Egypt – a country where, in rural areas, a staggering 70% of girls are forced to marry before they are 18.

The Board and Members of AIWF extend their warmest thanks to the team and leadership of Bicester Village for their delightful welcome and kind hospitality on this special occasion, which afforded AIWF Members, Partners and Board Members the opportunity to enjoy a unique social and networking experience. AIWF greatly values the cooperation of Value Retail Management and looks forward to jointly hosting similar social and networking events for AIWF Members in the near future, in London and other international cities where Chic Outlet Shopping® Villages are present.

AIWF represented at the Union for the Mediterranean Regional Forum in Barcelona

Heba Al Emara, UK Head of Relations EMEA, *Vistra Services*, UK

At the kind invitation of the Arab International Women's Forum, it was a pleasure to attend the second edition of the **Regional Forum of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM)** hosted in Barcelona on 23 January 2017 as a representative of AIWF and as UK Head of Relations EMEA for AIWF Global Partner *Vistra Services*.

The two-day Forum gathered delegations from the members of the UfM in the presence of the UfM Secretary General, **Fathallah Sijilmassi**, and representatives from the League of Arab States, the Anna Lindh Foundation, as well as various Parliamentary Assemblies. The theme of the Forum this year was *Mediterranean in Action: Youth for stability and Development*, centering around today's youth potential as the driving force for stability and development, a vision shared and supported by the AIWF. Much of the shared perspective was the intention to strengthen cooperation and synergies towards a better future for the Euro-Mediterranean region.

The Forum provided a unique opportunity for a useful dialogue with the Mediterranean partners and the business communities to discuss and identify the main lines of action for the future of youth across the region. It was an honour to be present at this Forum and observe the creation of the UfM roadmap, which intends to pave the way for concrete action and seeks to contribute to the strengthening of the role of the UfM towards an enhanced regional integration and cooperation in the Mediterranean.

AIWF Board Member Dr Alanoud Alsharekh awarded the National Order of Merit in France

Dr Alanoud Alsharekh, AIWF Board Member and Consulting Partner, Ibtakar Strategic Consulting, was awarded the knighthood of the **National Order of Merit** by the French Government on 08 February 2017, in appreciation of all her important work on women's empowerment in the MENA region and beyond. Dr Alsharekh is the first Kuwaiti to receive this award for the defence of women's rights.

With a BA from King's College, London and a Master's and PhD from the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), Dr Alanoud Al Sharekh has worked as a gender politics consultant for UNIFEM, Freedom House, and the UNDP on academic and social outreach projects in Kuwait and the GCC. Her teaching posts have included Kuwait University, Gulf University of Science and Technology and the Arab Open University. Dr Alsharekh is also a visiting lecturer at Uppsala University, Sweden, a Lecturer on Islam and Britain at SOAS, and Fulbright Scholar on Women and Islam at Whittier College, USA. She has published several books and articles on gender, cultural politics, and kinship policies in the GCC, including *Popular Culture and Political Identity in the Arab Gulf States*.

Dr Alsharekh is a truly inspirational role model for young women leaders in the region and internationally and AIWF extends its warmest congratulations to her on this momentous achievement. AIWF is immensely proud to have the benefit of her insight and experience as a valued Board Member of the Arab International Women's Forum towards our shared vision for inclusive youth development and women's social, economic and political empowerment.



Dr Alanoud Alsharekh, AIWF Board Member and Consulting Partner, Ibtakar Strategic Consulting, receiving the knighthood of the National Order of Merit on 08 February 2017

AIWF Board Member Hanan Saab appointed Jury President for Middle East & North Africa for the Cartier Women's Initiative Awards 2017



*Hanan Saab, CEO & Managing Director of Pharmamed
(Hanan Akram Saab & Co) SAL, Lebanon*

AIWF Board Member **Hanan Saab**, CEO & Managing Director of Pharmamed (Hanan Akram Saab & Co) SAL, Lebanon, was appointed President of the Jury for the MENA region for the Cartier Women Initiative Award in January 2017.

Mrs Saab, as a passionate advocate for women in business and an outstanding business leader in her own right, is a

valued Board Member of the Arab International Women's Forum; a Founding Member of Rawafed, an NGO that trains female high school students in nursing in rural areas; a Founding Member and the Former President of the Lebanese League for Women in Business; and a Founder and Board Member of the MENA Business Women Network where she also served as VP for many years.

Recognised as one of the region's leading businesswomen in the Financial Times, Mrs Saab was also featured as one of the Arab world's 200 Most Powerful Women by Forbes in 2014. She has previously been invited to speak on women's entrepreneurship at high-level conferences and forums worldwide, including at The Woodrow Wilson Conference, the Mediterranean Forum for Women Entrepreneurs, high-profile roundtables held by the World Bank, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, The Economist and the ILO.

The Board of the Arab International Women's Forum is very proud to have Hanan Saab's senior expertise and tireless commitment to the mission and values of AIWF, and congratulates her on all her achievements as a role model for Arab women and a dedicated advocate for the rights, security and empowerment of women in the Arab world and internationally.

AIWF Founder Board Member Sheikha Lubna Al Qasimi delivers keynote address at UN Secretary General's High Level Panel on Women's Empowerment in Dubai



Her Excellency Sheikha Lubna Al Qasimi, UAE Cabinet Member and Minister of State for Tolerance

AIWF Founder Board Member, **Her Excellency Sheikha Lubna Al Qasimi**, UAE Cabinet Member and Minister of State for Tolerance, was a keynote speaker at the recent meeting of the **UN Secretary General's High Level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment**, which officially opened in Dubai on 06 February 2017.

The UAE Gender Balance Council hosted the two-day event, which took place for the first time in the MENA region.

The High Level Panel was established to support and provide guidance on the implementation of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to improve economic outcomes for women, and promote women's leadership in driving sustainable, inclusive, gender-responsive and environmentally sensitive economic growth. The High Level Panel features representatives of government, business, and civil society and is co-chaired by **His Excellency Luis Guillermo Solis**, President of Costa Rica, and **Simona Scarpaleggia**, CEO IKEA, Switzerland.

Other members of the High Level Panel include **Christine Lagarde**, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund; **Jim Yong Kim**, President of the World Bank; **Guy Ryder**, Director-General of the International Labour Organization; **HE Samia Suluhu Hassan**, Vice-President of the United Republic of Tanzania; **Saadia Zahidi**, Head of Employment and Gender Initiatives at the World Economic Forum; **Sharan Burrow**, General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation; **Justine Greening**, UK Secretary of State for International Development; **Winnie Byanyima**, Executive Director at Oxfam International, as well as a diverse range of leading gender equality advocates, economic experts, academics, trade union leaders, and business and government representatives from all over the world.

AIWF Board Member Shaikha Al Maskari honoured with the Emirati Honorary Shield in recognition of humanitarian efforts and community development in the UAE

AIWF Board Member **Dr Shaikha Al Maskari**, Chairperson, Al Maskari Holding, has been honoured with the Emirati Honorary Shield by **His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Khalifa Bin Mohammed Bin Khalid Al Nahyan**, in appreciation of her distinguished contributions to humanitarian efforts and community development of the United Arab Emirates and in the framework of UAE Women's Day as proclaimed by **Her Highness Sheikha Fatima Bint Mubarak**, Mother of the Nation and Chairperson of the UAE General Women's Union.

Dr Al Maskari has also been presented with the Polar Star Order of First Class by **HE Jan Thesleff**, the Ambassador of Sweden in Abu Dhabi, on behalf of His Majesty King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden, a knighthood that dates back 370 years. At the ceremony, Dr Al Maskari said, "I am profoundly honoured and most appreciative of being bestowed with this historical award and I pledge to uphold the noble legacy of the Knighthood of the Polar Star Order for First Class".

AIWF warmly congratulates Dr Al Maskari for these outstanding achievements and such well-deserved recognition of her admirable service to women in the United Arab Emirates and the broader MENA region. The Board of the Arab International Women's Forum commends Dr Al Maskari for her tireless and invaluable commitment to the mission of AIWF and to giving Arab women leaders a voice and a platform to prosper.



Dr Shaikha Al Maskari, Chairperson, Al Maskari Holding, UAE

AIWF Global Partner SBWC announces leadership appointments to Nama Women Advancement Establishment and to the Sharjah Business Women Council

Her Highness Sheikha Jawaher bint Mohammed Al Qasimi, Wife of His Highness the Ruler of Sharjah, UAE, and Chairperson of Nama Women Advancement Establishment, recently announced two new key leadership appointments to the **Nama Women Advancement Establishment** and to the **Sharjah Business Women Council**; **Reem BinKaram** as Director of Nama and **HH Sheikha Hind Bint Majed Al Qasimi** as Acting Chairperson of Sharjah Business Women Council. AIWF is immensely proud to have the Sharjah Business Women Council as our longstanding valued Global Partner and commends the outstanding team at Nama and SBWC for the vital work that both organisations do for women not only in the UAE but around the Arab world and internationally.



Reem BinKaram, Director, Nama Women Advancement Establishment, Sharjah, UAE



HH Sheikha Hind bint Majed Al Qasimi, Acting Chairperson, Sharjah Business Women Council, Sharjah, UAE

Her Highness Sheikha Jawaher Al Qasimi, UNHCR's First Eminent Advocate, launches the Sharjah International Award for Refugee Advocacy

AIWF congratulates **Her Highness Sheikha Jawaher bint Mohammed Al Qasimi**, Wife of His Highness the Ruler of Sharjah, UAE, Chairperson of Nama Women Advancement Establishment and Chairperson, The Big Heart Foundation, on her recent launch of the **Sharjah International Award for Refugee Advocacy**, a timely and important initiative to recognise and honour humanitarians working at the forefront of the refugee crisis. The Board, Global Partners and Members of the Arab International Women's Forum are deeply inspired by Her Highness' vital efforts as UNHCR's first Eminent Advocate to increase public awareness at regional and global levels about refugees and people affected by war and displacement, especially women and children.



Her Highness Sheikha Jawaher bint Mohammed Al Qasimi, Wife of His Highness the Ruler of Sharjah, UAE, Chairperson of Nama Women Advancement Establishment and Chairperson, The Big Heart Foundation, Sharjah, UAE

AIWF welcomes new Global Diamond Partner Northern Trust



AIWF is delighted to announce that a new Global Partner joins AIWF in March 2017 – **Northern Trust**, a leading American bank which is rapidly expanding its MENA presence and recently opened an office of 12 in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, employing and nurturing five young Saudi women leaders in executive positions. "We are proud to support the Arab International Women's Forum," said **Michael Slater**, Country Head Saudi Arabia, Northern Trust. "At Northern Trust we are committed to creating an inclusive and diverse work environment and are pleased to be working closely with AIWF to support the empowerment, development and promotion of women leaders and executives in the region."

Businesses perform better when women are empowered in inclusive workplaces, writes Rania Rizk, Senior Vice President & General Counsel, PepsiCo, Asia, Middle East & North Africa

At PepsiCo, sustainability is a business imperative. It is about aligning business performance with social impact in a way that contributes to safeguarding the future of our world.



Rania Rizk, Senior Vice President and General Counsel, PepsiCo, Asia, Middle East & North Africa (AMENA) and Acting Chairman, Arab International Women's Forum

Sustainability can be achieved in many ways. One of them is the creation of value in society through the empowerment of women in the workplace. PepsiCo is proud to be the AIWF's first and only Global Corporate Benefactor Partner. Our missions align on several levels, one of which is promoting diversity

and inclusion policies in the workplace to unlock the potential of women in business.

Diversity and Inclusion are at the heart of PepsiCo's global business philosophy - 'Performance with Purpose'. But it's about more than that. Through our experience, we have evolved to embrace 'engagement' as a driver for empowered, productive workplaces. We give women and their families education and market-relevant workforce training. In Saudi Arabia, for example, where 6.5% of the PepsiCo workforce is female, we have a policy of actively hiring and training local women. In the snacks operation in Dammam, we employ 150 women. Of these, 100 work on women-only production lines. We provide special transport for women to our Saudi plants, give them their own offices, implement progressive and constantly evolving work-life balance policies, and support career development and progression through the Female Talent Development Council.

PepsiCo aims to empower people and enable social development across our operations, supply chain and communities. This was a pledge made in the '2025 Sustainability Agenda', launched late last year, which evolved the 10-year-old 'Performance with Purpose' into a new set of global goals for PepsiCo. In our regional leadership team, PepsiCo has four women out of 12. In the Asia, Middle East and North Africa sector, the number of women has risen from 5% to 20% as a result of our focus and commitment to gender diversity. Achieving such results requires planning and

a structured approach. During recruitment, we aim to ensure that 25%-50% of candidates for each open position are women. The business purpose is simple. As business leaders, we recognise that to stay ahead in a globalized, competitive world we need to engage the energy, knowledge and skills of entire populations, of which women are an important part. Recruitment is closely followed by retention; which is enabled by inclusion and engagement.

One of the ways we empower women is by creating role models. From the top down, we support the development of women as leadership role models. Internally, we do this by fostering peer-to-peer mentorship and striving to create an environment conducive to good work-life balance. Externally, we put our weight behind initiatives that help all our workers, including women.

We support women entrepreneurs across the MENA region through 'Hadafi', the skills-building, training, mentorship and entrepreneurship programme. 'Skills for Success Lebanon', in partnership with AMIDEAST, have engaged women from low-income communities in skills training. Some 100 women have graduated with English, financial literacy and soft skills that improve their employability. 'Tomoooh', supported by PepsiCo, is helping children, including young girls, to access healthy food in poor areas of the region, encouraging families to keep them in school longer.

Last year during AMWAJ, a sustainability summit held in Jordan, the 'PepsiCo Social Impact Competition' recognised the young people behind social start-up enterprises. Their talent demonstrates that, like PepsiCo, businesses can do good while doing well.

Over the next decade, PepsiCo Foundation will invest \$100 million to support initiatives to benefit at least 12.5 million women and girls around the world in communities near where we work. This financial intervention will have far-reaching consequences. As important, though, is the leadership intervention that continues to develop diverse, inclusive and engaged workforces reflecting the communities where we do business.

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



New Pearl Initiative Report Shares Best Practices to Develop and Retain Female Talent in Line with Saudi Vision 2030



Rania Rizk, Senior Vice President and General Counsel, PepsiCo, Middle East and North Africa

Gender diversity in the workplace remains a key issue for employers in the GCC region. This is one of the key findings of a new report developed by AIWF Institutional Partner the **Pearl Initiative**, the UAE-based business-led non-profit organisation, and AIWF Global Partner the **Sharjah Business Women Council**, launched in collaboration with AIWF Global Benefactor Partner **PepsiCo**, in Riyadh in February 2017.

Four of the region's leading companies surveyed for the report – **General Electric (GE)**, **Olayan Group**, **PepsiCo** and **Petroleum Development Oman (PDO)** – convened at the launch event to discuss the challenges of acquiring and retaining local female talent. The participants also shared best practices for ensuring inclusion and strategies to achieve stronger governance.

The report, titled '*Women's Careers in the GCC – Four Good Practice Case Studies*', aligns with Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 that sets the ambitious target of increasing women's participation in the workforce from 22 to 30 per cent. The vision also emphasises the importance of nurturing female talent, and acknowledges women's significant contribution to the development of Saudi society and economy. According to the Ministry of Education, Saudi women constitute 51.8 per cent of the country's university students.

Speaking at the event, **Carla Koffel**, Executive Director of the Pearl Initiative, praised Saudi Arabia's inspirational vision. She added: "In recent years, women in the GCC region have been breaking through the glass ceiling at a growing pace, increasingly taking on top government and private sector jobs. The real challenge now lies in attracting and incentivising the right talent, fostering an organisational culture that will retain them, and providing professional development tools to enable them to climb to top positions in every industry. The private sector plays a

pivotal role in driving change. Olayan Group, PepsiCo and GE are great examples of organisations that are leading the way in Saudi Arabia."

The report suggests that an integrated approach involving schools and universities, aggressive awareness drives at multiple levels, implementing supportive infrastructure, family engagement as well as women-specific policies and programmes are the most effective ways to address the challenges of female employment. Developing more role models from the region, creating women-centric opportunities, investing in segregated offices and other useful facilities at the workplace, and organising transportation to and from work are among the strategies companies can adopt to create an enabling work environment.

PepsiCo, which has been instrumental in rolling the case study out across the GCC region has adopted a tailor-made gender diversity and inclusion programme with four main focus areas: improving work/life balance, nurturing a culture of understanding by setting the right tone, creating opportunities for women and communication. In less than a decade, the percentage of female employees in PepsiCo's Saudi office increased from five to 20, with women holding four out of 12 positions on the leadership team.



Rania Rizk, Senior Vice President and General Counsel, PepsiCo, Middle East and North Africa

As co-partners of the event, **Rania Rizk**, Senior Vice President and General Counsel, PepsiCo, Middle East and North Africa, said: "We recognise that there is a significant opportunity for corporations to foster diversity in the workplace. At PepsiCo, our vision is to leverage this diversity for talent and business growth. In our Saudi office, we have made diversity a strategic priority by creating a strong culture of performance, establishing mentorship programmes and ensuring that female talent is developed at the same speed as male talent. This event has provided us with a great platform to discuss issues that remain a top priority for the global organisation as well as the regional operations."

In April 2015, The Pearl Initiative released a breakthrough report titled ‘Women’s Careers in the GCC: The CEO Agenda’, based on the findings of a GCC-wide research programme conducted in partnership with SBWC. The study revealed that working women in the GCC region are as ambitious and career-driven as their counterparts in the rest of the world, with over 50 per cent of those surveyed aiming at senior or board-level positions within the next seven years.



Carla Koffel, Executive Director of the Pearl Initiative

In addition, the Pearl Initiative invited top business leaders in the GCC region to take **The Business Pledge** during its second regional forum, *Sustainability in Action: Business and the Sustainable Development Goals*, hosted in collaboration with the **United Nations Global Compact** in late October 2016. The Business Pledge serves both as a commitment and a guide to the private sector’s journey towards responsible growth, and suggests practical and implementable solutions across four areas: Setting Targets for Sustainable and Responsible Growth, More Inclusive Workplace, Promoting Integrity, and Collaborations and Partnerships.

The Pearl Initiative summarised the findings of the case studies under two broad headings:

- Critical issues companies in the GCC region face
- Recommendations based on the outcome of the research

While the studies have found **acquisition and retention of the right female talent** to be the biggest challenge, they also suggest a solution for employers in the form of adopting *five best practices*:

- Creating balanced corporate culture through setting the stage for gender diversity in the workplace and providing role models.
- Investing in building career paths through structured career planning, mentorship and networking.
- Improving work/life balance through implementing

flexible work policies, offering support systems and providing women-friendly facilities.

- Adopting HR policies that ensure equality, such as harassment prevention.
- Taking on the role of advocates of female employment within the wider community through raising awareness, launching initiatives and, in general, acting as ambassadors of the cause.

The findings of the case studies as well as the level of ongoing participation in the Business Pledge prove that there is a real need for and interest in achieving gender diversity in the region, which meets with increasing acceptance and encouragement at all levels. Through its multi-level interventions, the Pearl Initiative is committed to changing the mindset of the entire regional business and student community in favour of gender diversity in the workplace



Participants at a high-level event held in Saudi Arabia in February 2017 to launch the *Women’s Careers in the GCC – Four Good Practice Case Studies* report

About The Pearl Initiative

Developed in cooperation with the United Nations Office for Partnerships in 2010, The Pearl Initiative is the leading Gulf business-led organisation fostering a corporate culture of accountability and transparency.

It seeks joint collaborative action between regional and global business leaders, international institutions, government bodies and wider initiatives within the Gulf region, exhibiting positive leadership and sharing knowledge and experience in order to influence the entire regional business and student community.

The Pearl Initiative, along with the United Nations Global Compact and its partner companies, is committed to implementing higher standards in areas such as corporate governance, anti-corruption best practices, inclusive management and boards, corporate reporting best practices and ethical leadership development.

AIWF Institutional Partner, Pearl Initiative, Honours HRH Prince of Wales with ‘Champion of Sustainability’ Award



His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales with Badr Jafar, Founder of the Pearl Initiative

AIWF Institutional Partner **The Pearl Initiative**, the leading Gulf business-led non-profit organisation working on corporate governance, conferred *The Pearl Initiative Champion of Sustainability Award* to **His Royal Highness Prince Charles** in November 2016, in honour of His Royal Highness’ tremendous contribution towards enhancing global understanding of the importance of sustainable business practices. The award was presented during the **GCC Regional Finance Leaders Circle of Practice Meeting** organised by the Prince of Wales’ Accounting for Sustainability (A4S) Project in Abu Dhabi.

Badr Jafar, Founder of the Pearl Initiative, said: “As a staunch advocate of numerous initiatives that contribute to making sustainability a mainstay for businesses and communities worldwide, HRH Prince Charles has had a formidable impact on the world at large. His vision to develop measurable interventions to protect future generations has guided several individual and organisational sustainability mandates. I am proud to count myself among those that he has influenced with his life lessons on sustainability. The Pearl Initiative is greatly honored to recognise HRH The Prince of Wales as a ‘Champion of Sustainability’ and we congratulate the Accounting for Sustainability Initiative for its success in working with businesses in the Gulf towards sustainable best practices.”



His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales greeting delegates of the GCC Regional Finance Leaders Circle of Practice Meeting

The Pearl Initiative has been working with the Prince of Wales’ Accounting for Sustainability Project for four years to spread awareness across the Gulf Region around the business case behind integrated reporting. The organisations signed a further cooperation agreement in April 2015 to create the Gulf Region Finance Leaders Circle of Practice – a vehicle to help share ideas, experiences and good practices amongst a group of experts in the regional finance community, to drive sustainability and set the pathway towards integrated thinking. The platform looks to create a space for collaborative innovation and to encourage companies to adopt an integrated approach by providing networking, mentoring and knowledge sharing opportunities.

In 2014, AIWF signed a MoU with the Pearl Initiative, which since 2010 has driven extensive programmes that positively influence business thinking in all countries of the GCC, producing regionally focused research-based insight reports and corporate good practice case studies. AIWF is very proud of its Institutional Partnership with the Pearl Initiative, and looks forward to even closer collaboration with the organisation in the year ahead.

The International Bar Association, AIWF’s Partner on the *Women Business Lawyers Initiative*, launches global research study to explore diversity in the legal profession

Jane Ellis, Director, Legal Policy & Research Unit, International Bar Association

The International Bar Association (IBA) and the Arab International Women’s Forum (AIWF) have successfully collaborated on a number of initiatives in the Middle East in recent years to promote the advancement of women in the law. The impetus for this collaboration was feedback from a number of Middle Eastern women business lawyers who in 2011 attended the IBA’s Annual Conference in Dubai. These lawyers were interested in strengthening their knowledge base, developing their international practices and enhancing their awareness of global standards and trends in the practice of law. In response to this, the IBA established the **Women Business Lawyers Initiative (WBLI)**.

The initial phase of the WBLI partnership involved the AIWF and IBA providing women lawyers in the Middle East with resources to enhance their practices substantively and enable them to take advantage of the broader professional skills development and networking opportunities offered by the IBA. The IBA and AIWF delivered this via a number of successful conferences and trainings in Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Nigeria, Zambia and Lebanon. Importantly, this partnership has facilitated the IBA to successfully engage with lawyers in the MENA region.

As part of the second phase of the WBLI, the IBA's Legal Policy and Research Unit (IBA LPRU) is currently undertaking an international research study to explore diversity within the legal profession. Research shows that there are significant gaps in diversity in more senior roles in the legal profession. Although women are graduating with law degrees and entering legal careers at higher rates than men, significantly fewer women continue into senior positions within the legal profession.

This global research aims to improve understanding about the respective experiences and motivations of legal practitioners as they progress through their careers, and to improve understanding of the reasons why lawyers choose to leave the legal profession or choose a different career path. This will lead to the development of retention strategies for law firms and legal associations. The IBA LPRU is seeking to obtain quantitative data and confirm trends in the progression of lawyers, and produce a report outlining practical measures to address the causes of high attrition rates among women lawyers, and re-engage women lawyers who have left the profession. The results of the study will help guide the future direction of the WBLI, including how the IBA can continue to collaborate with the AIWF to promote the advancement of women in the legal profession, including in the MENA region.



Jane Ellis, Director, Legal Policy & Research Unit, International Bar Association

The IBA Legal Policy and Research Unit would be grateful for input to the study from AIWF members who currently practise law, who have practised law but left the profession, and those who hold legal qualifications but have never practised law. To participate, please visit <http://www.ibanet.org/lpru/international-attrition-and-re-engagement-study.aspx>.

AIWF proud to support London Middle East Institute on the special occasion of the SOAS Centenary Lecture by HRH Princess Widjan Al Hashemi



HRH Princess Widjan Al Hashemi with Dr Hassan Hakimian, Director of the London Middle East Institute, and Baroness Valerie Amos PC, Director of SOAS University of London

AIWF was delighted to extend its full support to the London Middle East Institute at SOAS, University of London, on its **SOAS Centenary Lecture, Tribal Landscapes in Palestinian, Jordanian & Syrian Women's Embroidered Garments**, delivered by SOAS Alumna and Honorary Fellow **Her Royal Highness Princess Wijdan Al Hashemi**. The SOAS Centenary Lecture took place on Monday 23 January 2017, at the Brunei Gallery Lecture Theatre at SOAS University of London.

Mrs Haifa Al Kaylani, Founder Chairman of AIWF, is very proud to be an Advisory Board Member of LMEI and especially proud to have been able to extend her personal support on this important occasion and in the past when AIWF hosted Her Royal Highness for a reception and exhibition of leading Arab women artists. A longstanding friend and supporter of AIWF, painter, art historian, academic and diplomat Dr Wijdan Al Hashemi first trained in art in Amman with the Italian **Armando Prön** and Jordanian **Muhanna Durra**. She carries a PhD in Islamic Art from SOAS (1993) and is a Fellow of SOAS (2010). She established the Royal Society of Fine Arts (1979) which founded the Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts (1980), and founded the Higher Institute of Islamic Art and Architecture at Al Al-Beit University in Jordan (1993) and the Faculty of Arts and Design at the University of Jordan (2002).

In 1962, Princess Wijdan became the first woman to enter the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Jordan and she was also the first woman delegate to represent Jordan at United Nations meetings and the General Assembly. She was Ambassador of Jordan to Italy (2006-2011), and the first to write the history of modern and contemporary Islamic art with over 19 publications.

AIWF congratulates HE Ambassador Lana Nusseibeh, Permanent Representative of the UAE to the United Nations, on her election as President of the UN Women Executive Board for 2017



HE Ambassador Lana Nusseibeh, Permanent Representative of the UAE to the United Nations and President of the UN Women Executive Board (Photo: Permanent Mission of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations)

In January, the UN Women Executive Board elected the Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations, **Her Excellency Ambassador Lana Nusseibeh**, to the Presidency of the **UN Women Executive Board for 2017**. The Ambassador will be representing the Asia-Pacific Group at the United Nations during her presidency.

In her acceptance speech, Ambassador Nusseibeh highlighted the UAE's important achievements towards attaining gender equality and the empowerment of women, and noted that "gender equality is of paramount importance to the UAE" and emphasised that "the Constitution of the UAE guarantees equal rights for both women and men, and underpins the fundamental belief that women and men are equal partners in society."

Her Excellency also noted that a key aspect of women's advancement has been due to a steady focus on women's political participation, and that, today, women comprise 17.5% of the Federal National Council. She added that **HE Dr Amal Al Qubaisi**, President of the Council, was the first woman in the UAE and in the Arab world to lead a national assembly, and that women constitute 28% of the UAE Cabinet, holding diverse and important portfolios.

Ambassador Nusseibeh emphasised the importance of partnerships in advancing gender equality and empowering women: "With our strong record on women at home, the UAE has always looked for effective and constructive partners in the international and multilateral arena."

Ambassador Nusseibeh announced that 2017 will be a very important year for the Executive Board of UN Women as the Board will adopt the new Strategic Plan for 2018-2021, which will outline UN Women's work in

the next four years towards its common goal of achieving gender equality by 2030, as well as supporting the gender-responsive implementation of all goals of the 2030 Agenda.

A graduate of the University of Cambridge and the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) at the University of London, Ambassador Lana Nusseibeh became the first UAE female delegate to the UN before His Highness Sheikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, when she was sworn in as Permanent Representative of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations in New York in August 2013.

In this role, she works to advance the UAE's multilateral priorities at the United Nations, in particular on regional peace and security issues, humanitarian assistance, women's empowerment, sustainable development and human rights.

Prior to her appointment as Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Nusseibeh served in a number of capacities within the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs, most recently launching the Ministry's Policy Planning Department and serving as its first Director for three years.

AIWF extends its warmest congratulations to HE Ambassador Nusseibeh on her election as President of the UN Women Executive Board and assures its full support and cooperation on all efforts at the Permanent Mission of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations to advance the political, social, legislative and economic participation of women and youth around the world.

"The Constitution of the UAE guarantees equal rights for both women and men, and underpins the fundamental belief that women and men are equal partners in society. With our strong record on women at home, the UAE has always looked for effective and constructive partners in the international and multilateral arena."

HE Ambassador Lana Nusseibeh, Permanent Representative of the UAE to the United Nations and President of the UN Women Executive Board

AIWF congratulates Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW) at the Lebanese American University on the launch of an innovative new diploma that addresses gender challenges in the Arab region



Students at the Lebanese American University in Beirut

Dr Lina Abirafeh, Director, Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW), Lebanese American University, Beirut

Gender equality is both a human rights principle and a precondition for peace and sustainable, people-centered development. While gender equality is a global imperative, our reality is one of gender inequality. The 2016 Global Gender Gap report ranks the Middle East and North Africa as the region with the largest gender gaps in terms of health, education, economic and political indicators. Additionally, research indicates that a country's greatest predictor of peace is based on how it treats its women.

In recent decades, there have been important gains in some areas: new or amended legislation to eliminate discrimination against women and other barriers; improved enrollment by girls in primary and secondary education; and progress in reducing maternal deaths. But advances are unacceptably slow in other vital areas, such as increasing women's access to decent work or equal pay and ending violence against women. And - no country has achieved gender equality.

Women's empowerment is the missing element if we are to address the key challenges we face in the Arab region – poverty, inequality, conflict. Without gender equality and a full role for women in society, in the economy, in political and public life, it will not be possible to achieve a safe, just, and equal world.

To build Arab capacity to take on these challenges, the **Institute for Women's Studies in the Arab World (IWSAW)** at the **Lebanese American University (LAU)** joined forces with the Continuing Education Program

(CEP) at LAU and Human Rights Education Associates (HREA) to establish the Gender in Development and Humanitarian Assistance (GDHA) diploma. This diploma is an innovative new initiative that will build Arab capacity to achieve gender equality - the first of its kind in the region.

The Institute itself is also the first of its kind in the Arab region, focusing on advancing women's empowerment and gender equality through research, education, development programs, and outreach at the national, regional, and international levels.

The GDHA diploma is a practical training program built on technical approaches to applying gender to development and humanitarian programming. The diploma is intended for policymakers and practitioners, academics and experts, and students and youth, providing them with practical skills needed to address the full range of gender issues in development and humanitarian contexts in the Arab region and beyond.

Taught by seasoned experts in the field, the diploma consists of three focus areas: (1) Gender in Conflict – addressing the women, peace, and security agenda; (2) Gender Integration in Development Programming; and (3) Gender-based Violence Prevention and Response. Courses can be customized for groups, and are offered onsite or remotely through web-conferencing. Group discounts are available and accelerated programs are also available for those outside Lebanon. In short, the versatile and responsive nature of this diploma will enable us to reach across the Arab region and support those on the frontlines who will foster equality in Arab countries at this challenging time.

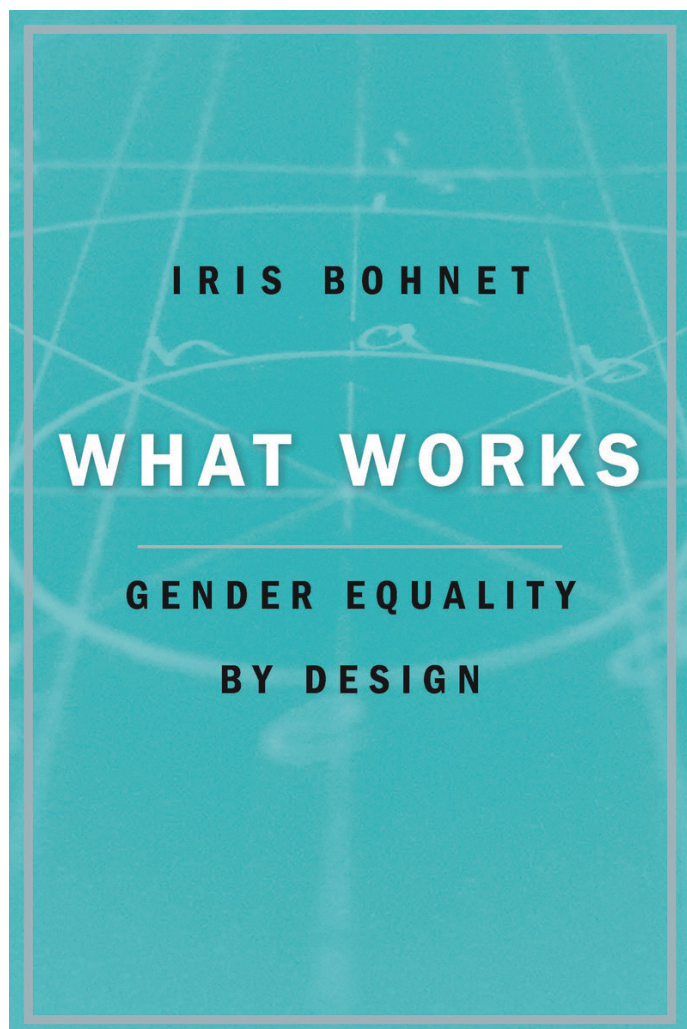
With this diploma, we aim to build champions in the Arab region who are committed to human rights, gender equality, and social justice. These pioneers need the right skills for this challenge, and gender equality is not only a significant challenge, it is our greatest challenge. This is the most important prerequisite for peace and sustainable development in the Arab region.

This diploma capitalizes on our historic moment in the Arab region – and our historic opportunity - to build the capacity of those who will achieve gender equality throughout the Arab world. For registration, course descriptions, prices, and schedules please visit: iwsaw.lau.edu.lb/GDHA.

AIWF congratulates Dr Iris Bohnet on achieving the Business Book of the Year award for ‘What Works: Gender Equality by Design’

AIWF congratulates **Dr Iris Bohnet**, Professor of Public Policy, Harvard Kennedy School, on the success of her book, *What Works: Gender Equality by Design*, and on the recent and much-deserved recognition for her work as winner of the Business Book of the Year. AIWF immensely appreciates the invaluable support of Dr Bohnet on all our important initiatives over the past decade and deeply values its longstanding history of close cooperation with Dr Bohnet, the Harvard Women’s Leadership Board, and the Women and Public Policy Program at Harvard Kennedy School.

With Dr Bohnet’s kind input, AIWF is particularly proud to have welcomed many speakers and guest delegates from the Harvard Women’s Leadership Board to AIWF Conferences in London, the Arab world and internationally. AIWF looks forward to working even more closely with women leaders and role models in the US in the coming year as AIWF addresses new challenges and opportunities for women in the global economy and further broadens the global scope of our commitment to women and youth.



Groundbreaking women’s leadership appointments in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

AIWF congratulates **Sarah Al Suhaimi** as the first Saudi woman appointed to chair the Saudi Arabia stock exchange, Tadawul; and **Rania Nashaar** as the first Saudi CEO for Samba.

The appointment in February 2017 of **Sarah Al Suhaimi**, as the first Saudi woman to chair the Saudi Arabia stock exchange, Tadawul, has been heralded as a groundbreaking step for Saudi women in the male-dominated finance sector.

Harvard University alumni Ms Al Suhaimi was also the first female head of a Saudi investment bank when she assumed the role of CEO of National Commercial Bank in 2014.

Also in Saudi Arabia in February 2017, **Rania Nashar** was named Chief Executive Officer of Samba Financial Group, becoming the first female CEO of a listed Saudi commercial bank. The following day, Arab National Bank named **Latifah Al Sabhan** as Chief Financial Officer, marking three groundbreaking appointments over the course of just six days for Saudi Arabia.

AIWF extends its warmest congratulations to Ms Al Suhaimi and Ms Nashaar and commends them for these milestone achievements for Saudi women in line with the government’s economic and social reform plans, which aim to increase the representation of women in the workforce to 30% in the coming few years from the current 22%.

A major achievement for Egyptian women: Nadia Saleh sworn in as Governor of Beheira in Egypt

Nadia Saleh was sworn in by Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El Sissi as Governor of the Nile Delta province of Beheira, where she has served as Deputy Governor since 2013.

Saleh, who trained as an engineer, is the first woman to serve as Governor in Egypt, in contrast with the long tradition of appointing retired male military or police generals as governors.

AIWF congratulates Ms Saleh for this groundbreaking appointment that will undoubtedly inspire many young Egyptian and MENA women aspiring to leadership in public service.

Working collaboratively and across cultures is essential to dealing with many of the world's current issues, writes Dr Maria Fernanda Arduino, President of Welcome Clubs International

Dr Maria Fernanda Arduino, WCI President

I would like to thank **Mrs Haifa Al Kaylani**, Founder Chairman of the Arab International Women's Forum, for inviting me to contribute with an article on WCI. It is an honour and a pleasure for me to do so. We look forward to working together in the pursuit of our goals.



Dr Maria Fernanda Arduino, President of WCI

WCI is an international, non-profit consortium that represents women's clubs from all over the world. Our clubs share a common goal of cross-cultural education, understanding and friendship. Our mission is to gain understanding through friendship, and to form friendships through understanding. In this way, we build personal connections with women in the belief that this will eventually influence positive relationships between countries. We believe we can help to achieve peace, as we strive to relate to one another with respect and care in our associations of international women. WCI acts as a forum for women from all cultures to communicate, without regard to political, cultural, or religious differences.

WCI was founded in 1986. Our founder **Marian Adair**, the wife of a US Congressman, realized that ambassadors' spouses, usually women at the time, arrived in the United States, and attended many public and social events; however, they seldom, if any, had the possibility to visit an American home. In this spirit, Marian founded Welcome to Washington, in 1959, - to open homes to ensure women from all cultures felt welcomed. This resulted in several clubs blossoming around the world. Hence, the need for a central organization to promote closer ties and to encourage communication between member clubs was

essential. Since its inception in 1986, WCI has grown in both the number of member clubs and the number of members worldwide.

A Board of Directors, consisting of the President and Liaison of each member club, is the decision-making body. The WCI Executive Committee reports to the Board at its meetings. The Board meets once a year; each club has one vote. The Board of Directors elects WCI's President who in turn appoints an Executive Committee. The Executive Committee, which meets throughout the year, carries out the decisions of the Board. WCI member clubs are autonomous and located worldwide. Individuals of member clubs are members of WCI.

Today the world has grown in complexity. The need to understand one another and to work collaboratively is proving to be essential to successfully deal with many of the world's current issues. We believe the leadership of women today is necessary and needs to be fostered in every sphere. WCI would like to contribute to this aim through working to relate to women from all backgrounds so that they are leaders of peace, understanding, and compassion in their communities. The vehicle to achieve this aim is education. Our international conferences act as a forum for our members to be educated through the speakers and the exchange with international friends. Our website, The Link Magazine (our biennial publication), a Membership Directory, and Sister Club News are all excellent means of intercultural communication and education. Currently, we are working on a more interactive website to promote the online participation of our members worldwide. Likewise, we are creating a program kit to share with our member clubs to foster initiatives for the betterment of the education of women in the host countries. WCI stands for women contributing to today's world using their talents and capabilities.

"Both personally and as Founder Chairman of the Arab International Women's Forum, I am proud indeed to have a longstanding relationship with Welcome Clubs International that dates back to my Presidency of the Federation of International Women's Associations in London in 1998 – 2000. Welcome Clubs International was a valued member of FIWAL, and I had many wonderful experiences and opportunities to speak at a great number of distinguished WCI meetings in London, Washington DC, and many other cities all over the world."

Haifa Al Kaylani, Founder Chairman of the Arab International Women's Forum and Fellow, Harvard Advanced Leadership Initiative 2017

AIWF commends the launch of the Global Entrepreneurship Network (GEN) to inspire and educate entrepreneurs and connect global leaders

Elaine Gold, Global Advisor & Co-Founder, Global Entrepreneurship Network UK

In November 2008, the then UK Prime Minister Gordon Brown, and Carl Schramm, President and CEO of the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, launched the first Global Entrepreneurship Week with over 30 countries participating. Since then, Global Entrepreneurship Week has expanded to 165 countries – building and strengthening entrepreneurial ecosystems around the world. The initiative is supported by dozens of world leaders and a network of roughly 10,000 partner organizations.



Global Entrepreneurship Network

During one week each November, thousands of events and competitions around the world inspire millions to engage in entrepreneurial activity whilst connecting them to potential collaborators, mentors and even investors.

In 2009, I established a GEW Board in Qatar and until 2015 represented Qatar at all the Global Congress meetings, liaising with the many other GEW hosts from across the MENA Region, sharing ideas for further collaboration and support. One thing that became very clear is that support for entrepreneurship is something which engages a complex network of stakeholders, and engages them for much longer than a period of one week.

In response to this appetite for year-round support, GEN was formed. Ranging from efforts to inspire and educate nascent entrepreneurs to advancing research and connecting global leaders in person, GEN operates in all types of economies and cultures.

The globalization of entrepreneurship has brought an explosion of programs, startup communities and investment into a new field where there is a lack of data around what works and what does not in supporting budding entrepreneurs and new firms forming and trying to scale.

GEN is a compass to help address these needs by identifying effective initiatives that positively impact whole societies, and interventions that target the most critical areas for entrepreneurial ecosystems around the world. Its mission includes:

- Expanding the number of ordinary citizens working for or starting firms around the world by fully legitimizing entrepreneurs in all cultures and economies. The world needs more entrepreneurs.
- Increasing understanding between the new and traditional elements of emerging startup communities and ecosystems including the constructive engagement of the public sector in supporting entrepreneur designed public programs. It takes a village where everyone collaborates to succeed.
- Supporting the emergence of a new class of global entrepreneurs with access to research, programs and networks inside the 160 nation strong GEN network. National boundaries are porous to innovation and a new creative class of risk takers is hard-wired to a global network.



Global Entrepreneurship Network

- Connecting an emerging community of national startup policy advisors with a next generation network of world-class entrepreneurship research institutions in an effort to generate more robust research and data to support evidence-based policymaking and more effective entrepreneurial support programming. In short, data and analysis on what works and what does not in helping new firm formation.

AIWF is delighted to support the GEN in its valuable aims. To discover more about GEN and GEW, please go to www.genglobal.org.



Global Entrepreneurship Network

AIWF commends Reach Mentoring and the 30% Club GCC's mentorship programme to develop confidence and leadership skills among C-suite executive women

Laudy Lahdo, Reach Mentoring Board Member

At Reach Mentoring we believe that a central challenge for women in their careers is confidence – it's a prerequisite for success because it impacts so much. When we are confident in ourselves our communication with our colleagues will be better, we will feel more comfortable being assertive and voicing our opinions or presenting ideas, and we'll become more visible in our roles.

Mentorship is particularly valuable in helping to building confidence – working with someone who has had experience in building a career and who can help identify behaviours, approaches and tasks that will grow your confidence, can be one of the best decisions you make. Established in 2013, Reach has seen over 200 women at varying stages of their careers matched with mentors from all industry sectors – both male and female – complete the organization's year-long mentoring programme. The specialised online platform adopted by Reach enables algorithmic matching of mentors and mentees to ensure compatibility on a number of levels, and includes objective setting and tracking, overseen by a professional trainer and project manager.

Synergies in addressing gender parity in the Middle East workplace have led to a formal partnership between Reach and the 30% Club GCC – the regional chapter of a global business-led initiative for achieving better gender representation in senior leadership positions.

As part of the partnership, Reach will deliver a structured C-suite level mentoring programme with mentorship from senior leaders in regional organizations, for 30% Club GCC members. The programme to be delivered as part of the agreement with 30% Club GCC will provide mentorship for women already in senior positions in organizations.

Organizations across the GCC states have achieved important milestones in enabling women to reach leadership positions. However, there is still the need for greater diversity on boards so that women can further demonstrate the value they add to the region's economies. Reach and the 30% Club GCC will work together to offer women access to more C-suite leaders, to help them unlock their true potential through structured, professional support.

Our partnership will allow us to further bridge the gender diversity gap in the workplace by engaging female leaders in positions of influence to serve as role models – this is not only critical to the career advancement of women, but stands to generate broader societal impacts on pay equity, changing workplace policies for the mutual benefit of both men and women, and attracting a more diverse workforce.



Laudy Lahdo, Board Member, Reach Mentoring

The 30% Club was established in London in 2010, campaigning for at 30 percent representation of women on FTSE 100 boards by 2015. There are 10 chapters across the world, with the new GCC chapter launched in 2015. A volunteer effort by business leaders from across the Gulf region, the 30% Club GCC is led by a steering committee of prominent women and men representing some of the most successful businesses, institutions and advisory firms in the region, and seeks better representation of women on boards and in senior level positions. For more information, please visit www.reachmentoring.org and www.30percentclub.org.

Following your passion is a must for business leaders, writes AIWF Member Caroline Fattal Fakhoury

In November 2016, after years of procrastination due to workload and family duties, I finally connected with my deep desire to dance and started Latin and Ballroom dance classes in Beirut. While there, I heard that a team of five women students would be going to Boston with their dance teacher to participate in The Eastern United States Dancesport Championship in February 2017.



I decided to challenge myself by joining them, so I competed in the New Comer ProAm section after less than three months of training and with no previous dance background, and had a total blast! It was pure enjoyment and I feel fully charged for months to come.

Being selected by the jury as among the top 20 students in over 400 participants was the cherry on the cake and made me as happy as my Forbes Middle East nomination for three consecutive years as one of the Arab world's 100 most powerful women in business.

When visiting our dearest Haifa Al Kaylani at Harvard University and while sharing this experience with her in February 2017, she insisted that I should share it with you. I believe that as business leaders, we strive to keep balance in an environment where connectivity is always more invasive and where me-time is less and less possible. One antidote is to follow your passion! Dance is my passion, what is yours? Would love to hear about it!

Caroline Fattal Fakhoury, Board Member Fattal Group, Lebanon, Founder Stand For Women, and AIWF Member



HOW TO JOIN AIWF

To join AIWF, please visit www.aiwfonline.com

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Date of next issue

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