



# AIWF NEWS

Arab International Women's Forum

المنتدى العربي الدولي للمرأة

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## Chairman's Message

As AIWF's 10th Anniversary year draws to a close, we can move forward with confidence towards the next important decade of our work following the sound recognition and acknowledgment of the Forum's achievements expressed throughout the course of our Special 10th Anniversary Programme. This landmark year has brought even closer collaboration with our valued global partners, members and many other esteemed supporters and, as Chairman and on behalf of the Board of Trustees of the Arab International Women's Forum, I would like to acknowledge the great strength and support that AIWF has received from working and cooperating with distinguished corporate, institutional, academic and media partners and from interacting with governments, the diplomatic services, political and economic forums, global institutions and organisations.

AIWF is proud to be at the forefront of international empowerment discourse, advocating sustainable, responsible change and ensuring that the rights and achievements of women are not forgotten in an uncertain global economic and political climate.

The Arab Spring has provided a major opportunity to enlarge and enhance the role played by women to achieve more stable and prosperous communities throughout the Middle East and North Africa. What is particularly important to ensure is that the gains made by Arab women before the Arab Spring – in education and in appointments as government ministers as well as their roles in many areas – are not erased. The Arab world is facing a renaissance and it must mobilise all its resources, including women and youth, to work towards achieving its full potential.

As Founder Chairman of AIWF, I was proud to attend the Policy Summit entitled *Crisis Without a Legacy?* in Abu Dhabi, UAE hosted by the Central Bank of the United Arab Emirates with the valued support of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW). At this summit, it became abundantly clear now more than ever that the region needs to create many more jobs and SMEs.

My recent presence in the Lebanon and Jordan provided me with the opportunity to meet with locally-based partners and members in Beirut and Amman respectively where we enjoyed productive and stimulating get-togethers.

I also welcomed the opportunity to meet with His Excellency Tom Fletcher, recently appointed UK Ambassador to Lebanon in Beirut.

My appreciation and thanks go to Petrofac, AIWF Global Diamond Partner, for hosting a meeting at their offices in St James, London of UK based Global Annual Partners on 24 October to exchange news and update partners with regard to AIWF's forthcoming programme and events.

During my visit to the USA in October and November, I was delighted to attend The International Alliance of Women Global Forum 'From Business to Philanthropy: Journeys of Economic Empowerment' at the Canadian Embassy, Washington DC and, as Chairman of AIWF, to address the Plenary Session 'eMentoring Emerging Leaders of Tomorrow'. AIWF was pleased to see Board Members and members alike receive *TIAW World of Difference Awards*, details of which are included later in this Newsletter.

## Dates for your Diary

ARAB INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FORUM

المنتدى العربي الدولي للمرأة

AIWF 2012 CONFERENCE

*Emerging Economies, Emerging Leaderships:  
Arab Women & Youth as Drivers of Change*

May 2012

The American University of Sharjah  
Sharjah, The United Arab Emirates

For more information contact the AIWF office  
Email [info@aiwfonline.com](mailto:info@aiwfonline.com) [www.aiwfonline.com](http://www.aiwfonline.com)

My visit to Washington DC also included a meeting with leading officials at The World Bank, a valued Partner of AIWF, as well meetings at the USA State Department and with Education for Employment, USA.

As International Vice President of the Women's Leadership Board at Harvard, I participated at a meeting in Cambridge, Massachusetts and as Chairman of the Arab International Women's Forum, I presented comments on the *Effects of the Arab Spring on Women*.

AIWF is collaborating with the Gulf Publishing Company by lending support for their Women's Global Leadership Conference in Energy and Technology in Houston, Texas.

Another event receiving AIWF cooperation is the **Confercommercio of the Piedmont Region, the Chamber of Commerce of Turin and No Peace Without Justice** as a **Supporting Partner for Businesswomen of the Mediterranean Forum** which links Arab and Italian businesswomen involved in entrepreneurship. HE Emma Bonino, Vice President of the Italian Senate and a long time supporter and partner of AIWF has taken a major role in the motivation for this event and will also moderate the key session '**Liberty is development – the female contribution**'.

In December, I look forward to visiting the United Arab Emirates on the special occasion of important meetings with our Global Benefactor Annual Partner, PepsiCo and also with all our valued AIWF Global Partners, kindly hosted by PepsiCo at their offices in Dubai. This annual strategic meeting of our corporate partners allows a review of the year, an exchange of current news and the opportunity for me to give a full briefing of the forward plans.

Our programme theme of **Building Bridges, Building Business: Emerging Economies, Emerging Leaderships** and our expanded geographical reach beyond the Arab world into Africa and Asia, looking at the challenges facing women and girls in these three major regions, have received wide acclaim as timely, pertinent and much needed and we shall continue to

Continued

### *(Chairman's Message Continued)*

take these themes forward and enhance them as we commit to our next decade.

At the invitation of the Chancellor of the American University of Sharjah (AUS), The United Arab Emirates, Dr Peter Heath, I am pleased to announce that the venue for the AIWF 2012 Annual Conference will be the Sharjah University Campus. AIWF is particularly proud to be able to advise that this important event will be under the esteemed Patronage of HH Sheikh Sultan Al Qasimi, Ruler of Sharjah.

The Conference theme will continue our focus on Emerging Economies, Emerging Leaderships but we shall be concentrating specifically on the issue of **Emerging Economies, Emerging Leaderships: Arab Women and Youth as Drivers of Change**".

We will advance the call for women and youth to reach out for the opportunities to contribute to shaping future Arab economic and social policy, to be involved in entrepreneurial excellence and take forward the message that the empowerment of women, poverty eradication, the enjoyment of human rights and economic equality are essential for sustainable development in the Arab world and developing economies.

The AIWF calendar becomes ever busier as we forge an increasing number of meaningful partnerships and alliances in our bid to help to create the conditions for women's progress, both within the region and internationally, thereby helping to ensure continued prosperity for women across the globe. AIWF's successful mission so far is testament to the power of partnership, and we firmly believe that it is only by working together, co-operating with our partners in civil society and the international community, that we can truly effect real change, shape a better future and achieve sustained growth and development for women, their families and their communities.

*Haifa AlKaylani*

**Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani**

*Founder Chairman, Arab International Women's Forum*

## Important New Development for Women in Saudi Arabia

On Sunday 25 September 2011, His Majesty King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia announced the enfranchisement of women to vote, run for local office and serve on the Shura Council — the advisory board to the Monarchy. This ground-breaking reform, although not implemented until 2015, comes only two years after the King appointed the first woman, an expert on girls' education, to a ministerial post. Her Excellency Nora bint Abdullah al-Fayez, a US-educated former teacher, was made Deputy Education Minister in charge of a new department for female students.

**Dr Afnan Al Shuaiby, Secretary General and Chief Executive of the Arab British Chamber of Commerce in the UK** and a valued member of the **AIWF Board of Trustees** gave her reaction to this landmark reform:

*"I very much welcome the decision of His Majesty King Abdullah to grant the women of Saudi Arabia the right to vote and to stand in future municipal elections, as well as the right to join the Shura Council as members. This is a wise decision and represents a great step forward for the Kingdom and its people. The decision recognises the positive contributions that Saudi women have been making to their country and opens up new ways for them to participate in the key decisions that affect their lives and their wider community. This can only strengthen the country."*

**Nadia Bakhurji, Member of the AIWF Board of Trustees and Interior Architect** also welcomed His Majesty King Abdullah's announcement which she felt was sending a clear message to men and, indeed, to women that women should become proactive and become involved in the decision-making process.

## AIWF Celebrates 10th Anniversary and Moves Forward



*Mr David Arkless, President of Corporate and Government Affairs, Manpower Group; Dr Afnan Al Shuaiby, Board Member Arab International Women's Forum; The Rt Hon William Hague, MP, Secretary of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, UK; Her Royal Highness, the Duchess of Cornwall; The Rt Hon the Lord Mayor, Alderman Michael Bear; The Lady Mayoress, Mrs Barbara Bear; Mr David Grace, Partner, PricewaterhouseCoopers, UK; Ms Rania Rizk, Vice President & Chief Legal Counsel, MEA Region, PepsiCo; Mr Warwick Hunt, Managing Partner ME Region, PricewaterhouseCoopers*

Looking back over the special events to mark the first ten years of AIWF's successful mission, they were exceptionally memorable and took the organisation into its second decade with an expanded geographical brief to encompass women and young people in the Arab world, Africa and Asia. The conference in particular helped to determine the AIWF forward strategy and to update its platform for advocacy towards progress and prosperity as set below.

The Special Programme *Building Bridges, Building Business, Emerging Economies, Emerging Leaderships* was launched at the invitation of the Rt Hon the Lord Mayor of the City of London, Alderman Michael Bear at The Mansion House, his official residence in the City of London. Her Royal Highness The Duchess of Cornwall was the Guest of Honour at the Reception, graciously meeting distinguished representatives of government, business, academia, global institutions and organisations from the Arab region, Europe and the wider international community.

Dinner followed in the Egyptian Hall where Guest of Honour and Keynote Guest Speaker, the Rt Hon William Hague, MP, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs spoke of the crucial role of women in the reforms taking place in many countries of the Arab region and paid tribute to the work of AIWF over its first decade.

This message was reiterated by The Rt Hon Lord Mayor of the City of London, Alderman Michael Bear and Mr David Arkless, President of Global Corporate & Government Affairs, Manpower Group.

Lancaster House, a former royal residence in the heart of London, was the setting for the unique one-day Special 10th Anniversary Conference entitled *"Women in the Arab World, Africa and Asia: Emerging Economies, Emerging Leaderships, Shaping the Future Together"*, where keynote guest speakers led the debates amid spirited interventions from delegates as they discussed political participation, the importance of education in all forms and at all levels, training and self-development, job creation and new ways of tackling unemployment, overcoming financial and traditional barriers to achieve empowerment and gender equity.

The Seminar entitled, **"Emerging Arab Women Leaders – the Voice of the Future"** held on 13 May, which was co hosted by PricewaterhouseCoopers and AIWF, was an important, ground-breaking and extremely successful event for emerging Arab women leaders from around the world, the objectives of which were to enhance and optimise the contribution to society and business of young Arab women by developing their business skills.



The following outcomes and policy recommendations emerged from our deliberations:

### Opportunities and Challenges for Women in Emerging Economies:

#### Opportunities

Opportunities for women in the region are increasing in that the percentage of women university students is now higher than ever before and it is currently globally recognised that the participation of women in the private sector is vital for economic growth and stability.

In addition, Arab women are at the forefront of transitional change and are benefitting from the global acceptance of the need for reform within the region and in particular for gender parity.

Access to electronic technology and social media continues to provide widening opportunities.

#### Challenges

The biggest challenge facing the region is high unemployment levels, particularly among young people, being exacerbated by demographic factors.

Women are under-represented in parliamentary and other elected positions as indeed they are in top leadership and decision-making roles. Consequently, achievement of the UN Millennium Goals becomes more important. In addition, in many Arab countries, there will be a need for women to work through the transitional status which now exists in the wake of the *Arab Spring*.

The disconnect between the levels of women and young people who have been well educated and the numbers of women working in the public and private sectors needs to be addressed.

#### Conclusion

In the light of the above findings, AIWF will include in its 2011-2012 programme:

- The setting up of a Young Professionals Network
- Creating a programme aimed at encouraging and supporting young people by developing self-confidence and leadership skills
- Working in close cooperation and sharing values and our mission with AIWF Global Partners on the issues of education, training, job creation, governance and gender equity
- Lobbying for the establishment of an AIWF Centre for Women's Entrepreneurship
- Establishing links and activities with women in Africa and Asia who share the AIWF objectives
- Cooperating and working in partnership with international institutions and organisations towards the realisation of the UN Millennium Goals.

AIWF will continue to provide opportunities for an ever expanding forum, bringing together thought-leaders, opinion-makers, decision-makers and stakeholders to look objectively and strategically at the impact of the *Arab Spring* and how the potential of women and youth can be optimised and fully utilised to build a better future.



HE Mrs Maryam Al Roomi, Minister of Social Affairs, UAE; HE Khalid A A S Al Duwaisan GCVO, Ambassador to the State of Kuwait in London; HE Raya Haffar El Hasan, Acting Minister of Finance, Lebanon; Mrs Raghdha Kurdi, AIWF Board Member, Jordan; Mrs Nadereh Chamlou, Senior Adviser, (Economic and Sector Work) MENA Region, The World Bank



Her Royal Highness, The Duchess of Cornwall; Dr Peter Heath, Chancellor, The American University, Sharjah, UAE; Dr Nada Mortada Sabbagh, Vice Chancellor, the American University, Sharjah UAE; Miss Eileen Taylor, Global Head of Diversity, Human Resources, Deutsche Bank



Mr David Arkless, President of Corporate and Government Affairs, Manpower Group; The Rt Hon William Hague, MP, Secretary of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, UK; The Rt Hon the Lord Mayor, Alderman Michael Bear



Ms Sehnaz Yilmaz, Turkish Representative, UNESCO Center for Women & Peace in the Balkan Countries; Ms Bineta Diop, Executive Director, Femmes Africa Solidarite; Ms Ecoma Alaga, Consultant, Femmes Africa Solidarite



Dr Shaikha Al Maskari, Chairperson, Al Maskari Holding & Chairperson, Tricon Group, UAE

## AIWF Get-Togethers in the Arab World

### Amman, Jordan, 25 September 2011

During the Chairman's recent visit to Amman, I had the great pleasure of organising a meeting of members and friends of AIWF in Jordan to meet Mrs Haifa Al Kaylani.

The following AIWF members and friends were present who first of all expressed their support and good wishes for Mrs Al Kaylani. They included Mrs May Khoury, Owner & Designer, Badr Adduja Arts & Crafts; Mrs Nisreen Haram, Managing Director, International Business Legal Associates; Mrs Maysa Batayneh, Founder & Principal Architect; Mrs Reem Abu Hassan, General Director, Jordan Branch, Arab Centre for the Development of Rule and Law and Integrity; Mrs Haifa Al Bashir, President, Jordanian Psychiatric Rehabilitation Society; Mrs Reem Habayeb, Director & Co-Founder, Silsal Ceramics; Mrs Majd Shweikeh, CEO, VTEL Holdings; HE Mrs Tamam El Ghoul, former Member of the Jordanian Government; Mrs Salwa Bamieh, Managing Partner, Modern Management Consultants; HE Mrs Suhair Al Ali, Senator, Jordan; Mrs Maysoun Sarraf, Owner's Representative, Al Rabya Hotels, Tourism & Commercial Centres Co.

Our discussions covered many important current issues including the economy, lack of transparency, governance, tourism and the political and economic situation in Jordan and surrounding countries.

Another major topic for discussion was the Arab Spring and the effect it would have, particularly on women in the Arab world. Men and women in the region would now be able to participate more in the decision-making of their societies and they would have a greater share in the resources of their countries.

The group felt that there were many assurances and indicators that reform in Jordan was genuine and on the right track and that Jordan would effect a smooth transition to a more democratic and power sharing future for its people.

**Raghda Kurdi**

*Founding CEO, Advanced Pharma Services, Jordan  
Member of AIWF Board of Trustees*

### Beirut, Lebanon, 5 October 2011

On 5 October, Mrs Al Kaylani took the opportunity of her presence in Lebanon to call a meeting of locally-based AIWF partners and members. This gathering took place in Beirut and a very enjoyable time was had by all.

Present at this meeting were Mrs Haifa Al Kaylani, Chairman, Arab International Women's Forum; Mrs Lamia Moubayyed Bissat, Director, Basel Flueihan Institute of Finance; HE Ms Raya El Hassan, Former Minister of Finance, Lebanon; Ms Mona Ghalayini, President-General Manager, Ghalayani For Trade and Turnkey; Ms Hana Alamuddin Haidar, Principal, Al-Mimariya, Architects for Sustainable Development; Mrs Najah Jaroush, Owner/Chairperson of Beqaa Chapter, Tassamim/LLWB; Ms Dina Kaddouh, Director, Union of Arab Banks, Lebanon; Ms Therese Naim, Chairman- Director General, GEDM; Mrs Hanan Saab, Managing Director & Owner, Pharmamed; Ms Christelle Stephan, International Financial Advisor, Merrill Lynch; Ms Sawsan Wazzan, Owner, General Manager & Head Dietician, Nutrition & Diet Center.

The subjects covered during the discussion related to a wide number of sectors which included architecture, politics, economics, education, arts and landscaping.

My first AIWF meeting was when I attended the Damascus Conference in 2010 entitled "*Prosperity through Partnership: Women Leaders in Modern Syria, the Arab World and the International Community*" during which I met many ambitious, energetic, impressive and passionate women, some of whom I have met at other events in Beirut in the past year.

At our meeting on 5 October, I realised the potential of being part of AIWF and how much it has offered me so far. I realised the value of the acquaintances and friendships I have made during the past 18 months since I joined. I also recognised the diversity of business women in Lebanon which made me so proud. Being a banker myself, it is very important for me to be surrounded by women of other areas of expertise and to be able to share thoughts and experiences. It gives me a great sense of fulfilment that I find difficult to explain.

Mrs Al Kaylani told us about the current AIWF activities and spoke of the plans being developed for the year to come. All I can say is that I am utterly excited and proud to take part in the future of AIWF.

**Christelle Stephan**

*Merrill Lynch PF & S, Wealth Management/International  
Financial Advisor, AIWF Member*

## Policy Summit in Abu Dhabi: *Crisis Without a Legacy?*

Mrs Haifa Al Kaylani, as Chairman of AIWF, attended this important Summit.

The objective of the Policy Summit entitled *Crisis without a Legacy?* hosted by the *Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW)* at the Central Bank of the United Arab Emirates in Abu Dhabi was to:

- provide an opportunity to stand back from current legislative and regulatory responses;
- produce a unique record of what leading figures across the world see as lessons that the world has learned or should learn from the crisis;
- identify changes in the power exercised by countries and institutions, as well as by ideas and attitudes; and
- present a progress report of whether fundamental changes are occurring or whether we are witnessing a crisis without a lasting legacy.

The discussions focussed on three areas of potential change which have been the subject of discussion and speculation since 2008:

### A new global order

Post-crisis, is the G20's momentum diminishing, or is its leadership helping the world to co-ordinate economic policy?

### A new era for financial services

Will the sector return to 'business as usual', or will regulatory and legislative reforms bring about a real shift in business and consumer expectations?

### A new role for governments

Are governments less able, or more willing, to intervene in markets following bailouts of the financial sector?

The insights from each summit will provide a unique record of how leading figures in different parts of the world view the emerging lessons from the crisis.

**From a Middle-Eastern perspective**, a major theme emerging from this fourth and final international policy summit was the need to make significant improvements to the education system throughout the Arab world in order to enable the next generation of Arab talent to compete more effectively in the global economy. In the wake of the Arab Spring, a key imperative is to tackle youth unemployment in the region.

*'There are jobs aplenty in Abu Dhabi which is why there is a large expatriate community servicing the needs of the local economy', explained Amanda Line, ICAEW Regional Director, Middle East. 'However, the challenge expressed by regional business leaders at the policy summit was how we can empower local talent to contribute towards what is increasingly a very global 'local' marketplace.'*

**Amanda Line, Regional Director Middle East**

*Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales*



### PepsiCo, AIWF Global Corporate Benefactor Partner, Working for Famine Relief and Sponsoring Young Arab Leaders at the UN in New York

#### PepsiCo Foundation Pledges \$1 Million towards East Africa Famine Relief Efforts

The PepsiCo Foundation announced on 16 August this year its commitment of \$1 million to famine relief efforts in the Horn of Africa.

*"Famine and drought have been called quiet crises, unfolding slowly and hitting society's most vulnerable particularly hard. That's exactly what's happening in the Horn of Africa today, and millions of people need help,"* said Indra Nooyi, PepsiCo Chairman and CEO and Chairman of the PepsiCo Foundation.

The \$1 million contribution will help support the efforts of the International Rescue Committee, the World Food Programme, and Save the Children, three long time PepsiCo Foundation partners with unique capabilities to provide relief to the affected areas. Specifically, the money will support several identified areas of need, including:

- \$500,000 to the International Rescue Committee to provide access to safe water and sanitation services in Ethiopia and Kenya.
- \$250,000 to the World Food Programme for food distribution in East Africa.
- \$250,000 to Save the Children to provide nutrient-rich food for malnourished children in Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya.

The PepsiCo Foundation also double matched all charitable contributions made by PepsiCo employees to Horn of Africa famine relief efforts up to 31 August.

PepsiCo has approximately 300,000 employees worldwide.

#### PepsiCo Sponsors Young Arab Leaders to Attend the Annual United Nations Youth Assembly in New York

In August of this year, fifteen Arab delegates from around the Middle East were among the 600 young leaders attending the Annual United Nations Youth Assembly (UNYA) as part of the PepsiCo Arab Youth delegation to discuss the world's progress towards the UN's Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

PepsiCo's youth delegation participated in the three-day conference at UN Headquarters in New York City. The delegation included youth leaders from Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, Palestine and the United Arab Emirates in an effort to empower and allow them to build their leadership skills and to raise their awareness of world issues.

*"PepsiCo is committed to empower youth by providing them with new experiences and learning opportunities"* said Saad Abdul-Latif, CEO of PepsiCo Asia, Middle East, Africa. *"Bringing together some of the brightest Arab youth leaders to the UN Youth Assembly allowed them to interact with other young people from all over the world and with experts in international development to find solutions for pertinent sustainable development issues facing our region and the world."*

PepsiCo chose individuals to participate in the UNYA based on their demonstrated passion for driving the UN MDGs and championing humanitarian causes, as well as other charitable contributions in their communities.

**Noha Hefny**

External Communications and CSR Manager, PepsiCo AMEA

### DLA PIPER Acknowledged at the 2011 Great (GR8!) Women Awards

**Congratulations to two members of DLA Piper**, the global law firm and AIWF Global Diamond Partner, who were acknowledged at the Great (Gr8!) Women Awards 2011 for their contribution to Law and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) emphasising the firm's commitment to empowering women and supporting the local community. The awards gala, held in Dubai, was hosted by the Indian Television Academy, the first time the awards have been held outside of India in their ten year history.

The Great (GR8!) Women Awards honours women who have reached the pinnacle of success in their field. From the world of cinema, business and philanthropy, through to fashion, education and journalism, winners demonstrate the kind of excellence that directly impacts the environment around them. Previous winners have included some of the most widely recognised pioneers in India, including Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, Sushmita Sen, Asha Bhosle, Nita Ambani, Shiela Dixit, Maharani Gayatri Devi and Rajshree Birla.

Mrs Jayshee Gupta, a lawyer at DLA Piper Middle East specialising in corporate and commercial law, was presented with an Achiever Award for her international contribution to Law. Mrs Gupta, who works across financial services, technology, media and telecommunications sectors, was acknowledged for her impact on the local legal world and her contribution to strengthening economic ties between the Middle East and India.

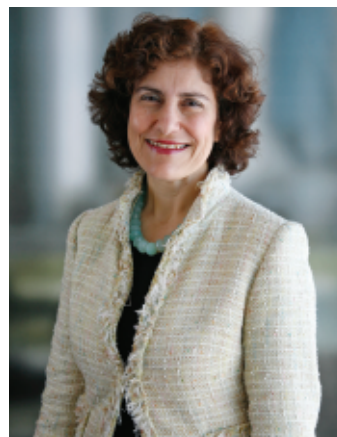
**Special Congratulations for championing** the hugely successful CSR programme at DLA Piper Middle East, to **Mrs Wafa' Tarnowska** who was awarded the CSR Achiever Award after successfully developing the firm's community programme. This programme included the implementation of a range of green initiatives, as well as two programmes that provided legal and financial assistance for 20 female entrepreneurs in Al Ain. She also trains and sponsors young Emirati lawyers taking part in mooting competition - mock trials - in both the USA and Britain.

*"We are delighted that Jayshee and Wafa' have been acknowledged at the Gr8! Women Awards 2011,"* commented Abdul Aziz Al-Yaqout, Regional Managing Partner, DLA Piper Middle East. *"Seeing two senior colleagues presented with such prestigious awards is testament to the commitment the firm has to empowering women and I'm delighted that Gr8! acknowledged their hard work and commitment in such a public forum."*

This year's event was the first in a series of ceremonies planned around the world in conjunction with the Great (GR8!) Women Awards which have been held in India for over a decade.

**Wafa' Tarnowska**

CSR Manager for Europe and UK  
DLA Piper



Wafa' Tarnowska

*Wafa' Tarnowska has been appointed the CSR Manager for Europe and UK for DLA Piper after having been their CSR manager for 4 years in the Middle East. In this new position Wafa' will manage and coordinate the Community Development and Corporate Responsibility projects and programmes for DLA Piper in the UK and Europe covering 32 offices.*

## Lakshmi Venkatesh of Petrofac describes her Career in Petrochemical Engineering

A woman building a career as an engineer is certainly not a new phenomenon. Thousands of women today are graduating with engineering degrees and making their mark as engineers. But not long ago, things were different.

I graduated in chemical engineering from one of the most prestigious institutes in India in 1983, when women engineers were scarce and the industry was not very receptive to welcoming women into the ranks. Today I am Assistant General Manager, Process and head the Process Group of Petrofac, Mumbai where about 80 engineers and designers work under my guidance. Petrofac Mumbai caters to the engineering requirement in oil and gas projects executed by Petrofac International mainly in the Middle East, North Africa and the CIS countries.

When I left university, the first challenge was just to get an entry into the industry; once in, there was the need to gain acceptance and to convince people that I could be assigned to all jobs and not just restricted to the desk. After marriage, followed by the arrival of children the difficulty in maintaining a work-life balance loomed large. As I grew in my career, getting people to accept a woman as their boss in a predominantly male dominated industry posed a challenge. Then I moved to the

Middle East, without my family, and worked in an EPC environment that tested not only my technical and managerial capabilities but also my emotional strength.

Looking back, I am proud of my career that has enabled me to travel to various parts of the world and has given me the opportunity to work with remarkable people from different cultures. It helped me grow from an unsure engineer to a confident woman who knew her strengths and could deal with her weaknesses. I believe my experience will find parallels with many women engineers because the problems we face are very similar irrespective of where we are located in the world.

Recently I have been appointed as Honorary Professor in the Department of Chemical Engineering at the Institute I graduated from and I think my career has come full circle. I value the compliment from one of my mentors "You have shown that in our profession a woman can either break the glass ceiling or push it higher to make a meaningful contribution to both business and society" and I hope I will be able to remain worthy of it.

**Lakshmi Venkatesh**

Assistant General Manager, Process  
Petrofac, Mumbai

AIWF would like to acknowledge with appreciation  
the valued support of AIWF Global Annual Partners

### AIWF Global Corporate Benefactor Partner



### AIWF Global Platinum Partners



Deutsche Bank



### AIWF Global Diamond Partners



### AIWF Institutional Partners



### AIWF Global Communications Partner



## News of AIWF Board Members and Members

### AIWF Board Member Wins Diplomat Award



Dr Afnan Al Shuaiby, Secretary General and Chief Executive of the Arab British Chamber of Commerce and Member of the AIWF Board of Trustees with the "Diplomat of the Year" award

***Congratulations to Dr Afnan Al Shuaiby, Secretary General and Chief Executive of the Arab British Chamber of Commerce and AIWF Board Member***, who was given the much valued award of 'Diplomat of the Year' for the Middle East 2011.

The Awards Ceremony, which took place on Monday 16th May, was held to recognise the achievements of foreign diplomats in London. In an anonymous vote the Diplomat Magazine and its panel of judges felt that the "Diplomat of the Year" for the Middle East Award could not have been given to a more deserving person.

The Diplomat highlighted the achievements of Dr Al Shuaiby as the first Saudi and first woman to be appointed to such a senior position. Dr Al Shuaiby was praised for her leadership, vision and contribution to the enhancement of Arab UK trade. Diplomat Magazine also commented on how the A-BCC has progressed enormously, and become the key body for promotion of Arab British trade since Dr Afnan Al Shuaiby took office.

Other 'Diplomat of the Year' awards included that to the Ambassador of Belgium for Europe, the Ambassador of Brazil for Latin America and the Ambassador of Japan for Asia.

### Family Charity founded by successful Businesswoman and AIWF Member

As Founder and General Manager for Bloom Dead Sea Gift Enterprise (Elham Zeadat and Partners Co. Ltd.) and subsequently Head of the Dead Sea Export Consortium, I was involved in simply running my business and growing it very steadily and securely until it became a well-known, international company exporting to 42 countries dealing with VIP Clients from 1993 for around 15 years.

In 2008, after the tragic death of our son Yazan, when his aeroplane crashed in January of that year, I established the Pilot YAZAN Aranki Charity Association with my family and started to run it alongside the Bloom Business.

As Yazan's family we made scholarship grants in his name at the school from where he graduated. Subsequently, we started to receive a lot of contact from poorer families who were asking us to find them work, to help their families with basic items such as food, school fees, etc.

316 families are now benefiting from the Pilot Yazan Association by job opportunities being created from home work through to developing new projects, providing affordable or free medical care, arranging grants or interest free loans for poorer students, distributing clothes and food, connecting donors with handicapped people to assist with equipment requirements and increasing awareness on health care, social welfare etc.

#### How we work :

Sales revenue is generated from a number of basic activities: such as growing herbs in very small available rented home gardens; checking quality and packaging home-made items for a fee per item; marketing and selling produce provided by other families for a percentage sales commission. All sales revenue is spent on school or college grants or loans.

***Engineer Elham Zeadat Aranki***

*Managing Director, Bloom Dead Sea Gift Enterprise, Jordan*

### AIWF Member and President of the Dubai Business Women Council becomes a Winner of the 8th International Business Awards



Mrs Raja Al Gurg, President of the Dubai Business Women Council and valued AIWF Member receiving the 8th Annual International Business Award (Stevie Award) from HE Sheikha Lubna Al Qasimi, UAE Minister for Foreign Trade and Member of the AIWF Board of Trustees

***Congratulations to Raja Al Gurg, President of the Dubai Business Women Council and AIWF Member*** who was recognised on 12 October as a winner of The **8th Annual International Business Award**, (more popularly known as The Stevie Awards) during a prestigious ceremony held at the Emirates Palace hosted under the Patronage of **HE Sheikha Lubna Al Qasimi, UAE Minister for Foreign Trade and Member of the AIWF Board of Trustees**.

This distinction was another milestone for Mrs Al Gurg who has also been a recipient of several other international and regional awards and was named by **Forbes Magazine** as one of the **"Women to Watch in the Middle East"** in 2005. Apart from her presidency of the DBWC which was established to help women become successful in business and as leaders, Mrs Al Gurg also manages at least 23 manufacturing and trading companies that collectively employ 3,000 people.

Commenting on the award, Mrs Al Gurg said, *"It is a great honour to be recognised by the International Business Awards as this distinction will serve as an inspiration for other women to become achievers in their chosen career paths. Women in the UAE and across the region are now increasingly making positive contributions to the socio-economic development of the Arab world. We are therefore very grateful that the Stevie Awards has validated the important role being played by women in our society."*

### AIWF Member installed as the new Master of the Worshipful Company of World Traders

***Congratulations to Ms Mei Sim Lai, Principal of LaiPeters & Co and AIWF Member*** on her installation as the new **Master of the Worshipful Company of World Traders**, the first time a Chinese person has held the position in the 850 history of livery companies in the City of London. Apart from running her own accountancy firm LaiPeters & Co, Mei Sim Lai also holds a large number of public, private and charitable appointments, including being the Queen's representative in the Borough of Brent in North West London. *"I give 110% to whatever I'm working on and I stay organised,"* she said.

Being ethnically Chinese from Malaysia, Mei Sim Lai has chosen China and the Asia Pacific region including Australia and New Zealand as her countries of focus for her year in office. By organising talks, visits and discussions, Ms Lai hopes to strengthen the trade relations between the Asia Pacific and Britain especially in financial services, education, tourism and technology. She will also take the World Traders to Shanghai next September when the Lord Mayor visits the City and will be holding a trade conference there on trade issues in that region. The World Traders is the livery company for those with an interest in international trade. Number 101 amongst the livery companies, it is a dynamic, prestigious company, highly regarded in the City of London.



## The International Alliance of Women 2011 World of Difference Awards

At the TIAW Annual Global Partnership Forum in 2007, TIAW announced it was creating a new awards programme to honour women who have made an impact on the economic empowerment of women through a wide range of endeavours. These are often the "unsung heroines" of our societies, ordinary women who accomplish extraordinary things. This year three new categories have been added: Men, Young Women under 25 and Corporations. TIAW honours up to 100 award recipients each year who have made a difference to the economic empowerment of women by naming them on the **TIAW World of Difference 100 List**.

**Congratulations to the following AIWF Board Members and Members, four of the winners of this year's awards :**

**Dr Afnan Al Shuaiby, Secretary General and CEO of the Arab British Chamber of Commerce, UK and Member of Board of Trustees of AIWF**

**Ms Bineta Diop, Executive Director, Femmes Africa Solidarite, Switzerland and Member of Board of Trustees of AIWF**

**Ms Neveen El Tahri, Founder & President of Board of Directors of Delta Investment Holding Company, Egypt**

**Mrs Peta Payne, Managing Director, International Women of Excellence and former Founder Member of Board of Trustees of AIWF**

Recipients of these awards will be recognised on October 27, 2011 as part of the TIAW Global Forum at the Canadian Embassy in Washington, DC.

## First Arab Woman to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize 2011

**AIWF Congratulates Tawakkul Karman, Yemen** who has led regular protests and sit-ins calling for the release of political prisoners in Yemen and is the first Arab woman to receive the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize. Ms Karman has been honoured for her activism work in Yemen on behalf of Yemeni women during the Arab Spring.

She and other activists with *Women Journalists Without Chains*, an organisation she founded in 2005, also demonstrated for the advancement of women's rights and the protection of freedom of expression.

The Head of the Nobel Peace Prize Committee and former Norwegian Prime Minister, **Thorbjørn Jagland** said that the prize is "a signal that the Arab Spring cannot be successful without including the women in it."

Ms Karman was one of three Women Laureates including:

**President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Liberia** – Africa's first democratically elected president who, in 2006, took over the leadership of a country whose government was known to be corrupt and whose infrastructure was verging on collapse and kept it from sliding back into chaos, and

**Leymah Gbowee, Liberia** who is a grassroots organiser who mobilised Liberian women "across ethnic and religious dividing lines," showing the ability of ordinary women to take on the rebuilding of civil society after conflict.

Thorbjørn Jagland underlined the importance of women in promoting peace saying "We cannot achieve democracy and lasting peace in the world unless women obtain the same opportunities as men to influence developments at all levels of society."

The Nobel Committee chose three inspirational laureates "for their non-violent struggle for the safety of women and for women's rights to full participation in peace-building work," saying it hoped it would "help to bring an end to the suppression of women that still occurs in many countries."

## Crucial Role of Young Arab Women in Reforms – Leaders of the Future

Ever since the beginning of this year, the Arab world has witnessed the impromptu revolution that started in "Sidi Bouzid" town and moved to other cities and towns within the region. Emerging as change catalysts within this unprecedented revolution, today's 100 million Arab youth are at the forefront of the political, economic and social debates.

Suffering from high unemployment rates, ill-adapted education, widespread corruption and lack of governance, Arab youth took to the streets demanding change and reforms that would give them more voice and a greater share within the different spheres of their communities.

The youth-led revolutions have now placed the Arab world at a crossroads and only through implementing sound political, socio-economic policies can Arab countries leap forward and capitalise on this active youth bulge and translate it into a dividend that not only promises greater economic and social impacts but also turns it into a window of opportunity and hope.

At this vital crossroads, the time is ripe for young Arab women to showcase their influence in societies exemplified by their crucial role within the revolutions which shattered the traditional status quo. Hence, the eventual inclusion and integration of those women into popular public discourse is vital to meet the challenges of reconstructing the society. In fact, this event can present a breakthrough in fostering greater women's economic and political participation, which sadly remains among the lowest worldwide.

With the introduction of Tunisia's gender parity ruling for July's assembly poll, we hope this will pave the way for more gender parity policies and regulations to ensure not only stronger women's participation and contribution in different avenues, but also a solid and rich national fabric for our societies.

**Farah D. Tukan**

MSc Student in Development Administration and Planning  
(Candidate) at University College, London

### How to Join AIWF

For further information on AIWF kindly contact:

**Arab International Women's Forum**

4th Floor

45 Albemarle Street

London W1S 4JL

United Kingdom

Tel: 44 20 7409 7788 Fax: 44 20 7409 7575

info@aiwfonline.com www.aiwfonline.com

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