

Dear Members,

As Chairman and on behalf of the Arab International Women's Forum, it gives me great pleasure to write to you today to express our thanks and deep appreciation for the valued partnership and support of the Women's Leadership Board on the recent and very special occasion of the AIWF Conference, *Partners for Change: Realizing the Potential of Arab Women in the Private and Public Sectors*, hosted by the World Bank in Washington DC on 22 – 24 June 2008.

This important event was a milestone for the AIWF 2008 Programme, bringing together a prolific and exclusive gathering of 180 people from over 20 countries. We were proud to have welcomed so many distinguished speakers, government representatives, international business leaders, academics and esteemed AIWF members and Global Partners, all of whom were truly inspired and encouraged by the expertise presented by a distinguished group of international Guest Speakers.

In my role as Vice Chair, International, the Women's Leadership Board, I was delighted to welcome many Women's Leadership Board Members and Speakers including Ms Marilyn Carlson Nelson, Chairman of Carlson Companies, who delivered an outstanding address on realising the potential of women's entrepreneurship and Ms Pernille Spiers-Lopez, President IKEA North America, who moderated and addressed the first day's morning session, *Powering the Private Sector: Arab Women in Business*. AIWF also gratefully acknowledges the participation of Ms Holly Taylor-Sargent, Founder and Director, Women's Leadership Board, Harvard University, who moderated the special interactive session *Visions of Entrepreneurship*. The presence of these distinguished business leaders and the participation of Members of the Women's Leadership Board contributed greatly to the overall outcomes and success of this initiative.

We were also very proud to incorporate the official US launch of the book, *Domains of Influence: Arab Women Business Leaders in a New Economy* within the Conference Programme. Supported by AIWF, the book was produced in partnership with The World Bank as a unique testament to the impact of Arab women in today's global environment of entrepreneurship and economic empowerment. The book is available on special offer until November 2008 (20% off - order form available from [info@aiwfonline.com](mailto:info@aiwfonline.com))

Another significant feature was the publication of the FT report *Leading Business Women in the Arab World* – on which AIWF has collaborated for the second year. This was published on the first day of the conference and available to the attendees and others at the World Bank.

The official conference booklet, the presentations, media coverage and photographs of the conference will be posted shortly on our website, [www.aiwfonline.com](http://www.aiwfonline.com).

We look forward to future cooperation with the Women's Leadership Board and welcoming members to the next AIWF event.

Haifa Al Kaylani  
Chairman  
Arab International Women's Forum