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Published:	United Arab Emirates, Tuesday, October 23 - 2007 at 14:27 (GMT+4)
Media Value:	US\$ 3,250 (based on reach of audited readership)

New Arab Woman Forum takes place in Dubai

The New Arab Woman Forum: Leadership and Social Responsibility conference was held on 21st October at the Jumeirah Emirates Towers, Dubai.



On the occasion, Mrs. Rajaa Easa Al Gurg, President, Dubai Business Women Council (DBWC) and the Managing Director of Easa Saleh Al Gurg Group, spoke on behalf of Her Highness Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein, wife of His Highness Sheikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of UAE and Ruler of Dubai.

She emphasized during her speech that Arab women's achievements at both the local and global levels, was realized because she had many rights. The Emirati woman, particularly, had benefited much from the wise guidance of the leaders. Her savings add up to \$100 million, she added.

Mrs. Rajaa Easa Al Gurg said that the Emirati woman's participation in all national sectors has taken her to a deserving place in society. She made it clear that Gulf women had assumed such a position in a short period of time because of three criteria: education, work and market participation.

Education had raised her place in society, and this is shown clearly from the rise in the number of female graduates that has reached 70 per cent for the academic year 2005-2006. Women are also actively participating economically and politically in society, especially in the corporate and legal fields.

On the economic side, the volume of the savings of Emirati women is about \$100m and the number of businesswomen is around 45,000. In the Gulf, the percentage of women forms 35 per cent of the national work force.

Mrs. Rajaa Al Gurg added that the Emirati woman has faced many challenges relating to three factors, the first of which is the issue of sustainable human development. This subject can be

effectively dealt with by being conscious of the environment. The second factor is globalization, which is considered posing challenges to social ethics, effecting traditional social behavior patterns in Gulf society. The third factor is related to women's empowerment.

She said that the Emirati woman had won many rights since the creation of the UAE. This made her an effective catalyst in society and it came from the belief of the political system in the equality of women. She undertook to educate herself at all levels without any distinction and later entered the job market without any hesitation until she had become a main player in all areas and managerial positions.

Now she is also in the National Council from where she has got the power to legislate, that guarantees her all constitutional rights, like the right to work, social security, right to own business and manage money. Also, this position gives her the ability to make use of her education she has attained at all levels, like the medical field and social services. It also guarantees she gets the same salaries as men.

Mrs. Rajaa Easa Al Gurg pointed out that the Emirati woman has been able recently to participate in political work strongly, as she holds about 22.5 per cent of the seats of Federal Union Council, 10 per cent of the Diplomatic Corps, 30 per cent in High Command Jobs, besides 66 per cent in the Government sector.

In the Gulf, women form 25% of work force and 4.5% have freehold business, 15% are in managerial councils and chambers of business and commerce, while 30% are in small and medium projects.

She confirmed that Emirati women's efforts have not been limited to the geographical boundaries of UAE, but have expanded to the other countries to guide the development of women elsewhere and to participate positively in the enhancement of legal rights of women, wherever they are.

Mrs. Rajaa Easa Al Gurg concluded that the Emirati woman now has enough maturity which enables her to achieve a lot, not only locally but also regionally and internationally as well.

She has to hold out the message of love and peace to all, as she was raised on these concepts which have been fostered by Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan (May God have mercy on him) followed by H.H. Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahyan, Ruler of Abu Dhabi and Sheikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of UAE and Ruler of Dubai.

Notes and Media Contacts

About the Dubai Business Women Council

Its mission is to proactively encourage business and professional women in Dubai to participate in a variety of business segments in order to enhance the contribution, productivity and activity of business and professional women locally and internationally.

Its objectives are the following:

1. To represent the DBWC at Arab and international conferences and forums related to business and professional women.
2. To cooperate with local and international institutions to increase awareness about the council and to share and contribute business ideas between the business women and different organizations.
3. To negotiate problems that face women at the work place and find solutions and recommendations to solve these problems.
4. Providing facilities and introducing business women to the Dubai Chambers of Commerce and Industry (DCCI), its services and activities.
5. Organizing networking opportunities by inviting business women to participate in a variety of events organized by the Dubai Chambers of Commerce and Industry.

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