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### **Enterprising women to champion global trade**

Over 150 prominent women engaged in business and politics are expected to gather in London next month for the 12<sup>th</sup> international forum of 'Women in Business', an event that has generated \$10 million in business deals in previous years.

The conference, which will be held from 19-20 May, aims to promote the influential role of women as part of the mainstream economic agenda.

UK Minister for Trade and Investment Lord Davies of Abersoch said today:

"The 'Women in Business' forum brings together leading international business women from around the world to discuss how they can work together to stimulate wealth creation.

"This is an opportunity to share knowledge in a changing world, but also to do business. The women at this event have significant interests in the UK. Their presence in London is an opportunity that British companies should capitalise on."

Business Secretary Lord Mandelson and HE Sheikha Lubna bint Khalid Al Qasimi, UAE Minister for Foreign Trade, and Rt.Hon Harriet Harman, Leader of the House of Commons and Minister for Women, are among those expected to attend the forum, which is supported by UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) and sponsored by the London-based Europe Arab Bank.

Key guests include Mrs Suzanne Mubarak (Egypt) and Mrs Talabani (Iraq). A large contingent of British businesswomen will also be present.

In the UK, women's enterprise contributes an estimated £60 billion to the UK economy each year.

Christine McCafferty MP Parliamentary Patron of Women in Business said:

"Promoting Women in Business is a crucial issue, not only for our economy but for society as a whole. It is not simply a matter of equality of opportunity but an

economic imperative, if we are to capitalise on the potential women have to offer our regional and national economies.”

“This conference has evolved over time and the calibre of this year’s participants clearly demonstrates that women are part of the global business elite. However, there is still further to go and it’s important to continue to develop the talent of women all around the world; more so in the present economic decline, it is crucial that the economic empowerment is still firmly on the agenda.”

Antoine Sreih, CEO of Europe Arab Bank, said ‘We are delighted to be sponsoring this initiative. As a company we are proud of our diversity and united by our culture. It is exciting to be at the forefront of any activity that promotes an exchange of knowledge and skills between businesswomen from the UK and Middle East.’

This year’s Forum is expected to attract specialists and experts from a number of industry sectors, including: Lady Barbara Judge, Chairman of UK Atomic Authority; Pamela Hartnell, CEO of Theo Fennel; and Averil Leimon (rated by the Independent as one of UK’s top 10 coaches).

Agenda topics and speakers at this year’s conference include:

**International Trade & Development**

Lord Mandelson, Secretary of State for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform.  
HE Sheikha Lubna bint Khalid Al Qasimi, Minister for Foreign Trade (UAE),

**Energy, the Environment and their opportunities**

Lady Barbara Judge, Chairman United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA)  
HE Mrs Benkadra, Minister for Energy (Morocco)  
Dr. Carole Nakhle, Research Fellow Surrey Energy Economics Centre (SEEC)

**Financing Business Growth and Development**

Baroness Hogg

**Women in Public Life**

Baroness Nicholson. MEP  
Dr Alia Bouran (Ambassador of the Embassy of Jordan)

**Human Potential – Developing the next Generation**

Sheikha Aisha Al Thani, Member of Supreme Council on Education, State of Qatar

**The power & influence of the media**

HE Dariga Nazarbayeva, founder of ‘Khabar’ broadcasting agency, Khazakhstan  
Fadia Fahed , Managing Editor of Laha Magazine

The Forum will be held from 19-20 May at the BERR Conference Centre, 1 Victoria Street, London.

## **Press Contacts:**

For further information or to register for a media pass please contact:

Ahmed Suleiman

T: +447785730409

F: +442089433701

Email: [womeninbusiness@aol.com](mailto:womeninbusiness@aol.com)

## **Notes to Editors**

**(1) Women in Business International** is a European wide registered trade mark. It is primarily a business to business network promoting women in companies as employees or employers by promoting them as part of the mainstream economy.

Founded in 1997 the organisation is a not-for-profit company that started life by organising 'Women in Business in the Arab World', an Annual conference for Businesswomen from the UK and Middle East. The initiative aims to promote and encourage business to business networking and the exchange of knowledge and skills between businesswomen from the UK and the Middle East, and the wider international business community. This ever expanding successful business network also organises training programmes in the Middle East and Africa encouraging the economic participation of women in national economies.

The initiative boasts the highest of reputations, past speakers at its conferences and events have included :- Her Majesty Queen Rania of Jordan, Suzanne Mubarak of Egypt, Mrs Asma Al Assad of Syria, HRH Prince Andrew the Duke of York, Mrs Ermine Erdogan of Turkey, Mrs Amina Karzai of Afghanistan, Mrs Hero Ibrahim Ahmed (Talabani) of Iraq, Bahia Hariri from Lebanon, Shaikha Hisah Saad Al Sabah from Kuwait, Shaikha Hanadi Al Thani from Qatar, Shaikha Lubna Al Qassimi, who is now the UAE's Minister of Economy and Planning and Mrs Zanele Mbeki of South Africa as well as an extensive list of leading figures from government and the international business community.

**(2) UK Trade & Investment** is the lead government organisation supporting UK companies looking to develop international business. It also supports overseas companies wishing to invest in the UK. UK Trade & Investment has a wide range of services, backed-up by a network of trade advisors worldwide who can provide market intelligence, advice on regulations, sales leads, and financial and practical support. [www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk](http://www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk).

**(3) Europe Arab Bank (EAB)** is a wholly owned subsidiary of Arab Bank. It opened its doors for business in August 2006 and has a capitalisation in excess of €605m. EAB's Head Office is in London, England and the Bank currently has offices in Frankfurt, Madrid, Milan, Vienna, Rome, Paris and Cannes. Clients of EAB plc have access to a comprehensive set of Treasury, Private, Corporate and Institutional Banking products and services, providing a niche service to a growing number of European companies and individuals wishing to transact with the MENA region. Standard & Poor's Ratings Services has assigned its 'A'-long-term and 'A-2' short-term counterparty credit ratings to the Bank, as an entity of the Arab Bank Group. The ratings reflect 'the group's superior geographic diversification, robust capitalisation, very strong liquidity, and good asset quality'.

**(4) The Middle East Association (MEA)** is the UK's premier private-sector organisation for promoting trade and good relations with the Middle East, North Africa, Turkey and Iran. The MEA is an independent and non-profit making association founded in 1961 and based in London. It represents some 400 large and small companies from all industry sectors who together account for an estimated 70% of UK trade with the region. The Patron of the Association is HRH The Duke of York, UK Special Representative for International Trade and Investment. Activities include conferences, seminars, trade missions, and receptions with visiting Ministers from the region and Arab and UK Ambassadors.