

**Under the High Patronage of the First Lady of Lebanon
Mrs. Wafaa Michel Sleiman**

THE NEW ARAB WOMAN FORUM

NAWF

October 23 and 24, 2008
Intercontinental Phoenicia, Beirut

The Arab world today is in the midst of a major process of transformation marked by a general improvement in economic fundamentals, solid growth, very large and rising financial surpluses among the oil producers, an accelerating pace of economic reform and liberalization, and attendant gradual social change.

Arab women are increasingly at the center of this ongoing transformation. As business leaders and executives, political and social activists, wealth holders and investors, consumers, and mothers, they are a growing force to reckon with and to take account of. In the GCC countries alone, wealth controlled by women in the GCC countries only was estimated at US\$346 billion at the end of 2007 and projected to rise to US\$385 billion by 2011.

But the future progress of Arab women in the future will be an evolutionary not a revolutionary process and the challenge will be how to consolidate the gains made by women in all aspects of life in order to achieve a higher level of employment of all their capabilities.

Organized by



Gold Sponsor



Silver & Press Sponsor



Silver Sponsor



Media Partner



Following up on the overwhelming success of the first New Arab Woman Forum that was held in Dubai on October 21-22, 2007 the second yearly

forum will take a closer look at the evolving role and position of Arab women in the face of remaining and future challenges, and how these challenges are being, or can be, overcome.

For this purpose, the forum is organized under two main and meaningful headings, with the first day devoted entirely to the question of women and leadership in politics, business and society generally, and the second to the broader concept of the meaning of womanhood and feminism in the Arab world in its various attributes, activities and implications.

A number of major and sometimes sensitive questions and issues will be posed and discussed including:

- Are Arab women making their impact felt in politics and why do they seem unable to generate their own political power?
- What is the future role of Arab women in public life, business, etc?
- Which feminine model should be promoted for the Middle East?
- Do Arab women generally enjoy equal educational opportunities?
- Are norms of beauty contributing to the liberation of Arab women or reducing their self esteem?
- To what extent do Arab men still consider that a woman's achievements upset established traditional values?

The New Arab Woman Forum is organized by Al-Iktissad Wal-Aamal Group and Al Hasnaa Magazine the leading Arab women's magazine since it was first published in 1909. As in the first forum, the 2008 forum will bring together a distinguished group of speakers and participants from both genders, but including first ladies, women ministers and public officials, business leaders, social scientists, writers and journalists, artists and actresses, heads of NGOs and other social institutions, and other personalities and activists.

Organized by

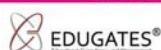
In Cooperation with

Gold Sponsor

Silver & Press Sponsor



ABOUT THE ORGANIZERS



Al- Hasnaa Magazine:

Published for the first time in 1909, Al Hasnaa was the first women's magazine in the Arab world. As an avant-gardist publication, it was a pioneer of social modernity in the Sixties. As a faithful platform for women, it contributed to their liberation and rights. And in raising the many issues on the role women in Arab cultures and societies, Al Hasnaa has always been at the center of heated debates about the new Arab woman. Al-Iktissad Wal-Aamal Group, owners of the monthly business magazine Al-Iktissad Wal-Aamal and the bi-monthly Middle East Travel, acquired this magazine in 1998, to diversify its product range and address the very important feminine population in the Arab World.

Al-Iktissad Wal-Aamal Group:

Al-Iktissad Wal-Aamal Group is the leading business communications group in the Arab world, combining among its activities publishing, conferencing, and investment and trade promotion events. The group's conferencing and promotion skills combine relevance of topics, caliber of speakers, market advantage, networking abilities, placement power, organizational abilities, and coverage. Al-Iktissad Wal-Aamal's activities cover the entire Arab world and increasingly Europe and the Asian continent. Its regional office in Dubai was established in 1988 and is an important link in its growing network of offices in the region.

Forum Agenda*

Day One: 23 October 2008

Women and Leadership

08:00-09:15 **Registration**

09:30-10:15 **Opening ceremony**

10:15-10:45 **Award Ceremony**

10:45-11:00 **Networking Coffee Break**

11:00-12:15 Panel I: Women in Politics

Even though Arab Women are becoming more politically active, their influence in politics and public life, and their electoral strength are still perceived as somehow limited.

This Panel will discuss the following issues:

- How influential are Arab women in politics?
- How can their involvement in politics be strengthened?
- Are they better politicians than men?
- Is there an Arab woman prime minister in the making?

12:15-13:30 Panel II: The Leadership Mystique

The broad definition of leadership as "influencing and coordinating people to contribute willingly to the good of the collective, and the achievement of its goals" is generally based on western models. A more representative understanding of leadership needs to be applied to the Arab world and Arab women. And while significant progress has been made by Arab Women in terms of education and participation in the work force, their leadership role remains relatively limited.

This Panel will discuss the following issues:

- Lessons from leadership coaching: women vs men
- Emerging leadership qualities for Arab women
- Arab women on regional boards
- Power to the family: Family businesses and their implications on women leadership

13:30-15:30 **Lunch**

15:30-16:45 Panel III: Education, Technology and Identity

With the changing position of the Arab woman and her growing inroads into business and public domains, and with the growing importance of science and technology in the modern economy there is now an urgent need to develop women's education across the Arab world, with increasing emphasis on science and technology, and thus to promote and take full advantage of their capabilities in all fields.

This Panel will discuss the following issues:

- How can technical knowledge and experience among professional women be widened and promoted?
- Is technological proficiency necessary to accelerate the integration of Arab women and Arab societies generally in the globalization process?
- Does the level of technological knowledge and adaptability define our identity, or will it do so increasingly in the future?
- What are the risks of the increased emphasis on modern technology?

16:45-17:00 **Networking Coffee Break**

Organized by



Gold Sponsor



Silver & Press Sponsor



Silver Sponsor



Media Partner



17:00-18:00 **Panel IV: Women in Business**

As the number of women and working mothers has increased in the Arab workforce, large companies and corporations are sometimes using that to competitive advantage to reach new market niches or gain a woman's perspective of market needs. But competition is also growing between men and women in the workplace and the challenge is becoming tougher for women.

This Panel will discuss the following issues:

- How has the work environment changed since women entered the business world?
- Do they offer new approaches and new insights?
- Are they treated equally in terms of financial compensation and advancement opportunities?
- Do employers tend to pigeonhole women in specific positions?
- The role of Young women Leaders

Day Two: 24 October 2008

All about Women

09:00-10:30 **Panel V: Men Talk about Women**

In the face of the emergence of a new Arab woman; more educated, more empowered, and more demanding, Arab men seem to be increasingly uneasy. In this exciting panel, they give their views on this revolutionary change underway. The audience responds and reacts.

This Panel will discuss the following issues:

- How do men perceive women and how are they affected by the changing roles of women in the Arab world?
- Do they think some roles are typically feminine and others typically masculine?
- Do men see a conflict between women's equality/ambition and traditional values?

10:30-10:45 **Networking Coffee Break**

10:45-12:00 **Panel VI: Sexuality and Taboos**

The "sexual revolution" that has swept western societies has brought about a major change in gender roles and relations, but also a questioning and sometimes a breakdown of established values. These same issues are posing themselves with increasing urgency in the Arab world.

This Panel will discuss the following issues:

- How are the gender relations and roles changing in the Arab world?
- Is it necessary to break taboos?
- What should be preserved?

12:00-13:15 **Panel VII: Women in Situations: Image and Inner Self**

This panel will question situations affecting women physically, emotionally and mentally. From beauty to health to violence, these situations deeply transform women inner self.

This panel starts with individual Monologues Reading from "The Good Body" play written by Eve Ensler.

This panel will discuss the following issues:

- How do these situations affect women self-perception and build their self-esteem?
- How does it impact their environment?
- Physical and mental violations:
 - New norms of beauty
 - Physical violence

13:15-13:45 **Concluding Session**

13:45-15:15 **Lunch**

**This program is subject to change as seen necessary by the organizers*

Organized by

In Cooperation with

Gold Sponsor

Silver & Press Sponsor



Silver Sponsor

Media Partner

