AIWF CHAIRMAN ADDRESSES 41ST ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND AGM OF EUMA IN LIMASSOL, CYPRUS ON 25 & 26 SEPTEMBER 2015

AIWF Chairman, Haifa Fahoum Al Kaylani, accepted an invitation to address the European Management Assistants (EUMA) Conference in Cyprus on 25 and 26 September, 2015. EUMA is an international quality network of management support professionals who focus on their personal development and on the future of their profession. The encouragement of members’ individual development and the continued evolution of the management support profession are a few of the Association’s aims.

EUMA was founded in 1974, and is currently represented in 26 countries. There are National Groups in: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. The Association also has individual members in: Croatia, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and the United States. The Conference was formally opened by a speech from Mrs Androulla Vassiliou, Former European Commission of Education.

Mrs Al Kaylani then addressed the guests and began by explaining why she founded AIWF, its aims, and her work in the organisation which has spanned over 14 years. She explained how her training as an economist has impacted on this work, particularly in terms of analysing the obstacles facing women and how AIWF is working to provide solutions to overcome such obstacles. Mrs Al Kaylani also spoke about how AIWF has been an agent of change for women in the Arab region encouraging women to take greater leadership roles in all sectors of public and civil society. She highlighted the significant obstacles they have overcome in the region to date whilst also emphasising the obstacles that still remain in the economic, political, legal and public spheres. In particular, she focused on the importance of education for women in the Arab world and of securing employment in order to achieve sustainable empowerment for women.

Mrs Al Kaylani then opened up the discussion to the table and a lively exchange followed on the role of women in business and in public life, both in the region and in the UK, based on the guests’ experience as women and as professionals working in or connected to the region.

Daisy Tarnowska
Solicitor, Farrer & Co

On 27 April this year, AIWF Chairman Haifa Al Kaylani visited this outstanding educational institution in Madaba, Jordan. King’s Academy is an independent, co-educational boarding and day school which provides outstanding young men and women from Jordan, the Middle East and beyond an educational experience unlike any available in the region.

In the light of the tremendous turmoil and suffering the region has witnessed in recent years, the mission of King’s Academy has never been more important, more necessary or more urgent. This turmoil has only strengthened the school’s resolve, deepened its sense of purpose, and affirmed its core values and commitments to educational opportunity, inclusivity and forms of learning that promote inquiry, curiosity, dialogue and deep understanding.

Since opening in 2007, King’s has become a dynamic hub of international exchange and interfaith dialogue. This year’s student body consists of almost 40 different nationalities and King’s remains the only school in the Middle East to welcome students of all religious faiths.

The Arabic Year programme, launched in 2012, continues to thrive, attracting adventurous young men and women for a year of intensive Arabic language study and cultural immersion. Last year King’s was the first school in the Middle East to host the Round Square International Conference, welcoming around 600 delegates from five continents and over 50 schools. Most recently, some 500 young leaders from throughout the world attended the United Nations Global Forum on Youth, Peace and Security, held on campus last August.

Despite the slump in Jordan’s economy, school enrolment has grown. Next year, King’s will open a middle school for grades 7 and 8 in order to create a more coherent and dynamic educational pathway for students. In addition, the school’s pioneering commitment to financial aid remains unmatched in the region, with 43 percent of students receiving some form of financial assistance. The diversity of the student body remains the school’s greatest resource, and as a residential boarding school, students learn how to live in a diverse community.

In a recent survey, King’s alumni identified empathy, dialogue and open-mindedness as three of the most important qualities of mind they learned at the school. King’s teaches through questions, discussion and inquiry – skills that are essential for success and for creating students who are self-directed, independent and open to divergent perspectives.