



**WOMEN'S FORUM**  
FOR THE ECONOMY & SOCIETY

**WOMEN'S FORUM  
MIDDLE EAST**

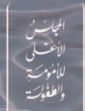
Abu Dhabi | 7-8 March 2020

**Under the Patronage of  
H.H. Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak, Mother of the Nation**

**Women's Forum Middle East  
PROGRAMME**

**Embracing Power & Purpose:  
An ambition for the new decade**

**A unique place to celebrate the values  
of 2020 International Women's Day**



Motherhood  
& Childhood



اللوفر أبوظبي  
LOUVRE ABU DHABI



SORBONNE  
UNIVERSITY  
ABU DHABI

الاتحاد النسائي العالمي  
GENERAL WOMEN'S UNION



*Under the Patronage of H.H. Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak, Mother of the Nation*

In celebration of International Women's Day 2020

## **The Women's Forum Middle East**

### **Embracing Power & Purpose: An ambition for the new decade**

**Louvre Abu Dhabi on 7 March and Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi on 8 March 2020**

The Middle East has emerged as one of the most dynamic regions in the world, becoming a global leader in innovation and technological transformation through visionary and bold economic programs. [Home to more than 400 million people, boasting a young and innovative workforce of 103 million, and scattered across 22 countries](#), the region celebrates its history of grand rulers, religious intersection, and plentiful trade. This history, often misconceived for its traditional ways, is in fact the source of the region's remarkable diversity, and the springboard for its pioneering spirit across all fields, ranging from financial innovation, entrepreneurial explosion, and climate change breakthrough to government transformation and technological disruption.

As one of the most digitally connected regions in the world, with an average of [88 percent of the population online daily, and 94 percent of the population owning a smartphone](#), the Middle East has become a promising ecosystem of burgeoning start-ups. Investments in the future of entrepreneurship continues to thrive, a prime example being Expo 2020 Dubai's \$100 million USD fund for projects solving social and environmental challenges. The region is ready to start the new decade stronger than ever, poised to make unprecedented breakthroughs in social and economic progress.

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More than 60% of university graduates in STEM in Saudi Arabia and the UAE are women. Still, they make up only 21% of the labor force and only contribute 18% to the region's overall GDP. In a region where women remain a largely untapped resource, they are quickly changing mindsets about their own potential. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is making great strides towards closing gender gaps and taking a stand to supporting diversity and inclusion initiatives that influence systemic cultural, economic and political change across the Middle East.

Thus, the UAE government is welcoming the Women's Forum for the Economy & Society to co-host the **Women's Forum Middle East**, in celebration of **International Women's Day**. Under the patronage of **H.H. Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak, Mother of the Nation**, this pioneering Meeting, taking place at Le Louvre Abu Dhabi and La Sorbonne Abu Dhabi on March 7-8, aims to foster women's leadership for a daring new decade of sustainable and inclusive growth in the UAE and in the region. We believe that women's leadership is imperative to unlock the Middle East's tremendous economic and technological potential.

Under the theme of **Embracing Power & Purpose: An ambition for the new decade**, more than 600 high-level visionary leaders, thinkers and doers from the Middle East, North Africa, and beyond will gather with the ambition to drive inclusion and innovation through the new decade. The Meeting will bring women's leadership to life on the most pressing economic and social issues of our time and contribute with insights and strong messages to the G20 being held in Saudi Arabia next November.

**Let's embrace power & purpose!**

**Let's engage for impact!**

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## PROGRAMME

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### Saturday, March 7th

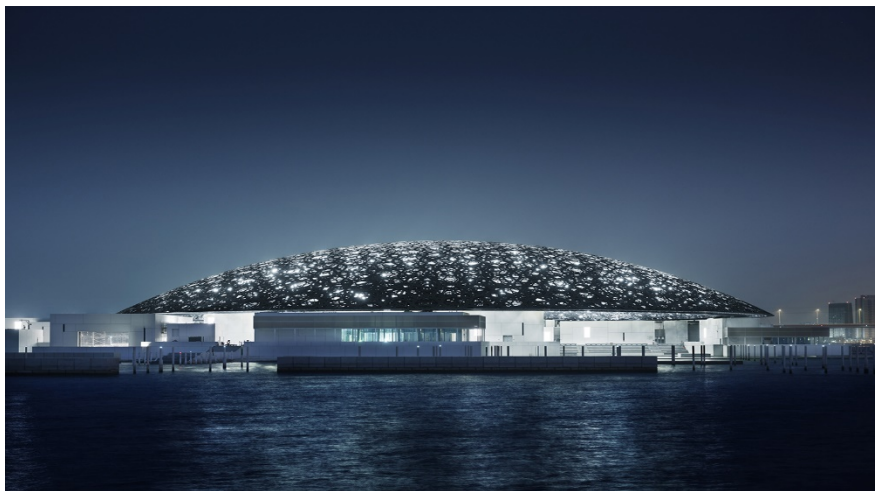
#### **Forward Together: A purposeful tribute to H.H. Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak, Mother of the Nation (TBC)**

In recognition of Sheikha Fatima's achievements on women's leadership in the UAE and beyond, female leaders will convene to hear first-hand about her visionary leadership. Ever since her contribution to founding the first women's organization in 1976 (the Abu Dhabi Society for the Awakening of Women), Sheikha Fatima has continued to be a key change-maker for the nation's advancement on women's rights, especially regarding girls' education. Her exceptional legacy will inspire us to continue forward.

**20:00-22:30**

#### **Opening and Gala Reception at Louvre Abu Dhabi**

Speakers: Representatives from the Government of the UAE



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## Sunday, March 8th (International Women's Day)

Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi



**8:30**            **Registration (by invitation only)**

**8:30-9:00**     **Networking coffee**

**9:00-9:30**     **Message from H.H. Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak, Mother of the Nation by**  
HE Dr. Maitha Salem Al Shamsi, Minister of State, Government of UAE

**9:30-10:15**

**[Opening plenary]**

**Driving the ambition of a new decade: Equal opportunities for all**

Inclusion and diversity can revolutionize the region's growth, and tackle the pressing challenges of this decade. Today, women make up only [21% of the labor force in the Middle East and North Africa, translating to only 18% of the region's overall GDP](#). If this labor force participation had increased in the past decade, GDP growth in the region could have doubled (an increase of 1 trillion USD). Many countries are taking initiatives to unleash the power of diversity. What is the outlook for the Middle East in the new decade? What opportunities and challenges are they facing? How will diversity and inclusion help to unlock the region's full potential?

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**10:15-11:00**

**Raising the bar: Accelerating sustainable market growth with financial innovation**

The World Bank expects real GDP in the MENA region to [grow at 2.6% in 2020 and 2.9% in 2021](#). Yet, to fulfill these positive projections over the course of the new decade, we need strong financial leadership to break down barriers to competition, and simultaneously unlock the vast potential of the region's 400 million people. Women's noteworthy presence in the financial sphere will likely change the status quo when it comes to ownership of assets and financial accounts. What is the impact of technology and innovation on sustainable financial services? How can women in finance better contribute to the region's investment strategies and financial innovation? How will Islamic banking factor into this? What does the future hold for banks?

**11:00-11:45**

**Shifting Gears: Future forward with inclusive creative industries**

*Women4Business DC session*

The creative economy provides [29.5 million jobs globally, and with a global revenue of US\\$2,250 billion](#). As a vital part of the new knowledge economy, the creative industries drive sustainable growth, generate social value and inclusion by blending cultural tradition and technology. Much potential in this sector remains untapped globally and in the Middle-East in particular. What strategies and policies to harness the power of creative industries, as well as to accelerate and sustain a dynamic creative economy? What can we do to facilitate entrepreneurship in the creative sector? What is the future of creative entrepreneurship?

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**11:45- 12:30**

**Embracing purpose: Women's leadership in Peace and Security**

War and violence, which continue to run rampant in many parts of the MENA region, have a disproportionate impact on women and girls. 2020 marks the 20th anniversary of the first-ever UN Security Council's resolution to specifically mention the impact of armed conflict on women, [Resolution 1325](#) on women, peace and security (WPS). This high-level commitment not only calls for the protection of women and girls in conflict zones, but also for women's strong integration in the conflict resolution process. How are the countries of the MENA region addressing these issues through their [National Action Plans \(NAPs\)](#) and domestic policy reforms? How will we support leaders, peacebuilders, and human rights defenders through the WPS agenda?

**12:30- 14:30 CEO Champions Initiative [By invitation only]**

**12:30-14:00 Networking lunch**

**14:00-14:45**

**Powering up sustainability: Riding the wave of the green economy**

*Women4Climate DC session*

In a time where climate change is an ever more urgent reality, we must tackle the challenge of shifting towards renewables and sustainable infrastructure. The Middle East is the underlying powerhouse behind the world's entire energy architecture, and holds the world's greatest potential for change ([45 percent](#)) in renewable energy production. Keeping this in mind, the role of the private sector will be vital, as mounting pressures of rising CO2 levels continue to grow around the world. The transformation of urban infrastructure and designing smart cities will also play a crucial part in the shift towards a green economy. How are women leading on this front? What future green investments are on the table for the G20? This session will explore the ways that we can work together to transform our global carbon footprint by tapping into our innovation potential.

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**14:45-15:30**

**Next frontier: Getting ready for future of work**

*Women4STEM and Women4AI DC sessions*

The growing adoption of artificial intelligence and automation in the workplace, and the expansion of the workforce to include both on- and off-balance-sheet talent are fundamentally changing the way we work and the way companies design jobs and environments. 45% of existing work in the Middle East is potentially being automated by 2030. So what are implications for policy makers, for companies and for individuals? How will businesses operate under the new realities of work? How can we take this opportunity to re-skill and up-skill the workforce, especially in fast-growing STEM roles? How can we reimagine talent models, organizational practices, and business models for a more inclusive organizations and better future for both women and men?

**15:30-15:40** **Networking break**

**15:40-16:10**

**Breaking boundaries:** A special conversation with extraordinary women in the Middle East

**16:10-16:55**

**Unlocking opportunities: Women leading change in governance and politics**

Only 2% board positions across the six countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and 13% of CEOs in the region are women. This gap remains significant in government representative bodies as women hold only 18.8% of the total seats. When women are meaningfully represented and engaged in leadership roles, laws, rulings, and decisions are consequently more inclusive and representative. For business, women's leadership improves performance, drives transparency, encourages innovation and more. The Middle East is also home to the highest proportion of women entrepreneurs who are the sole owners of their company. How can we change the current mindset to foster women's leadership for meaningful impact in the region?



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**16:55-17:40**

**Reaching for the stars: what's next in space?**

Listen to trailblazing women and men in space who will share their stories of human exploration, technology, and science. Moving forward, what is the ambition and vision for space innovation and exploration? Where is the next frontier and how will we get there?

**17:40-18:30**

**[Closing Plenary]**

**A call to the G20: Rewriting HIStory & HERstory together**

By 2025, the market power of women's increased participation in the workforce could add an estimated \$2.7 trillion to the region's economy. What policies can help the Middle East take advantage of this untapped human capital and resources to transform its economies and societies in a meaningful and impactful way? What are concrete recommendations and commitments to equal opportunities that we can bring to the G20, from individuals, businesses and governments of the Middle East? What messages can the UAE, as the special invitee of the G20 Summit, deliver to the world leaders?

**19:30-21:00**

**Visit to the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque and Coins of Islam exhibition**

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### LIST OF CONFIRMED SPEAKERS

**Master of Ceremony: Elissa Freiha, Founder, WOMENA**

First name	Last name	Position	Organization	Country
Sarah	Al Amiri	Minister of State for Advanced Sciences	Government of UAE	UAE
Tayba	Al Hashemi	CEO	Al Yasat Petroleum	UAE
Noura	Al Kaabi	Minister of Culture and Knowledge Development	Government of UAE	UAE
Haifa	Al Kaylani	Founder & Chairman	Arab International Women's Forum (AIWF)	Lebanon & Jordan
Mohamed Khalifa	Al Mubarak	Chairman	Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority	UAE
Sheikha Shamma bint Sultan bin Khalifa	Al Nahyan	CEO Founder	Alliances for Global Sustainability Circle of Hope foundation	UAE
Fatema Mohamed	Al Nuaimi	CEO Chairperson	ADNOC LNG ADNOC Gender Balance Committee	UAE
Mina	Al Oraibi	Editor-in-Chief	The National	Iraq
Amal	Al Qubaisi	President	The UAE Federal National Council	UAE
Maitha bint Salem	Al Shamsi	Minister of State	Government of UAE	UAE

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Noora	Al Suwaidi	Director	The General Women's Union	UAE
Deemah	Al-Yahya	Founder	WomenSpark Initiative	Saudi Arabia
Rasha	Alazem	Creative Business Partner for Emerging Markets	Google	Kuwait
Hala	Altuwaijri	Secretary General of the Council of Family Affairs and Chair of G20 Women Empowerment	Government of Saudi Arabia	Saudi Arabia
Borina	Andrieu	Managing Director	Wilmotte & Associés Architectes	France
Aïcha	Bah Diallo	Former Minister of Education of Guinea; President	Aide et Action	Guinea
Irina	Bokova	Former Director General Member	UNESCO Higher Committee of Human Fraternity	Bulgaria
Ouided	Bouchamaoui	Nobel Peace Laureate 2015 and Former President of UTICA		Tunisia
Graham	Brewer	Partner	Clifford Chance	UK
Hessa Bint Essa	Buhumaid	Minister of Community Development	Government of UAE	UAE
Claire	Carter	Director in Marketing, MEA	Lenovo	South Africa
Nadereh	Chamlou	Former Senior Advisor to the Chief Economist of MENA	The World Bank	Netherlands

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Benoît	Claveranne	CEO International and New markets	AXA	France
Chiara	Corazza	CEO	Women's Forum for the Economy & Society	Italy/UK
Christopher	Córdova	Strategic Adviser	Government of Mexico	Mexico
Hanan	Darwish	CEO-Founder	HD	Egypt
Manon	Dave	Vice President of Product Innovation	EF Education First	UK
Sonali	Dhawan	Vice President , Asia Middle East and Africa	P&G	India
Farah	Foustok	CEO Middle East; Steering Committee Member	Lazard; 30% Club GCC	UAE
Elissa	Freiha	Founder	WOMENA	UAE
Anne-Gabrielle	Heilbronner	Member of the Directoire and Secretary General	Publicis Groupe	France
Star	Jones	President	Professional Diversity Network, NASDAQ	USA
Donia	Kaouach	Executive Director, President	Leaders for Peace, Tunisiennes Fières	Tunisia
Marzena	Kulis	Managing Director	Johnson & Johnson Middle East -Medical Devices In	Poland
Jack	Lang	President	Institut du Monde Arabe	France

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Jennifer	Marles-Malone	Head of Human Resources	Bayer Middle East	Australia
Raha	Moharrak	First Saudi Woman To Climb the 7 Summits; Art Director		Saudi Arabia
Valeria	Palermi	Editor in Chief	D La Repubblica	Italy
Silvia	Serrano	Executive Director	Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi	France
Shelly	Trench	Managing Director & Partner	BCG Dubai	Trinidad and Tobago
Ersilia	Vaudo	Chief Diversity Officer	European Space Agency	Italy
Olivier	Wigniolle	CEO	Icade, Caisse des Dépôts	France