



## **Press Release**

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W.I.N. – 10 years of inspiring women

### **GLOBAL FEMALE LEADERSHIP FORUM ATTRACTS RECORD ATTENDANCE FOR ITS ANNIVERSARY EDITION**

**Oslo - Norway, 27 September 2007** – A record number of 700 delegates including 80 speakers representing global corporations, NGOs, government bodies, as well other established orators from the global circuit have come together at this year's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition of the W.I.N. Forum (Women's International Networking). Designed by women for women and men, the Forum provides a platform to discuss visions, strategies and skills for female leaders in today's world. Over the next four conference days, W.I.N. will offer six plenary sessions, 40 workshops and working groups, 70 one-on-one coaching sessions, daylong networking opportunities and glamorous evenings.

According to Kristin Engvig, founder and director of W.I.N., the Forum went through a tremendous evolution over the years. It has not only grown in size but also content-wise. "The W.I.N. Forum was the very first worldwide Forum of its kind focusing mainly on supporting women in doing business internationally. Today we have 7 times more attendees than at the first W.I.N. Forum in 1998. And the Forum reflects a much broader agenda, aiming to stimulate strong women leaders worldwide to help improve the state of the world by transforming communities, work and life in a way that works for generations to come".

The 10<sup>th</sup> WIN Forum will look into issues as diverse as how female leadership can help tackle global challenges such as terrorism, hunger, the environment, migration, over-consumption. It will also give the floor to inspiring personalities – from senior managers to sports champions - to share their views on how women can be leaders in today's world while remaining true to themselves. The Forum will also focus on the importance of diversity and inclusion within a business.

Gabi Zedlmayer, Head of Corporate Marketing for Europe, the Middle East and Africa at HP, said: "We know that a diverse employee base leads to greater creativity and innovation which drives HP's business successes. We not only promote and support women's development within HP but we also support women externally. For instance, we have just launched a special programme called GET-IT, which helps women entrepreneurs acquire specific business and IT skills that will give them a much better chance to enter professional life or to run their own business. Women are more and more starting up their own business which is a great development."

Among the keynote speakers is also Margherita Agnelli De Pahlen, one of the founders of Blue Orchard Finance and VP of the World Microfinance Forum. Ms. Agnelli believes microfinance paves the way towards better economic opportunities for low-income entrepreneurs all around the world and sees that women have a major role to play: "When extreme poverty is the daily reality of a family, men tend to let themselves go. Women are left with their children. That is why ninety percent of micro-credit clients are women. They face reality, create a dream and they weave it into their lives with just a few hundred dollars to buy a goat or some weaving materials.' Giving women the means to lift themselves out of poverty and to educate and care for their children is a goal I could not turn my back on. And it is much more than that: by allowing this creativity of the feminine soul to express itself we can actually move into what I call a culture of peace."

Liv Arnesen, the first female to ski solo and unsupported to the South Pole, firmly believes women's motivation is key to reaching targets. "Most goals can be achieved as long as the motivation is real and sincere enough. I am more convinced than ever and believe intrinsic motivation is one of the most crucial keys to being successful in business." Today, Mrs. Arnesen lectures in self management and team work for companies, organizations and schools.

To mark the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the WIN Forum, the conference will also look at what has been achieved over the past decade by corporate women and at what cost. "This anniversary edition also provides the perfect occasion to thank all the many women who have contributed to make W.I.N. a success over the past ten years", said Kristin Engvig. "Coming from a variety of backgrounds, nationalities, religions and age groups, they have manifested year after year that it is possible to work together efficiently and beautifully developing visions and initiatives for the future. This is the true W.I.N. spirit!"

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**About W.I.N.**

W.I.N. is an independent, European, mission-driven organization with a global impact. It is run by a team of professionals and supported by a large group of volunteers all inspired by playing a role in shaping the future. In 2006, the W.I.N. Forum was held in Rome, Italy, and attracted close to 600 women from 70 countries including corporate executives, small business owners and entrepreneurs, professionals (doctors, lawyers, academics, artists, journalists), politicians, and NGOs. Learn more at [www.winconference.net](http://www.winconference.net)