

Global business leaders arrive in Belfast for second day of International Business Women's Conference



Women in Business NI welcomes groups of global delegates from the UAE, Croatia, Indonesia, Lebanon, Libya, Palestine, Rwanda and Somalia for second day of International conference

The first International Business Women's Conference on the island of Ireland, IBWC 2014, continues into its second day in Belfast and today welcomed two further groups of international delegates to its audience.

The event, hosted by Women in Business NI, today welcomed a delegation of entrepreneurs from the UAE as part of a UK business mission supported by the UK Trade & Investment, Invest Northern Ireland and the UAE-UK Business Council, with the aim of creating meaningful business connections. Furthermore, a group of influential women executives from post-conflict and ongoing peacebuilding regions joined IBWC 2014 as part of the Bank of America and Vital Voices Global Ambassador Programme.

Belfast is one of only three UK cities chosen to play host to the UAE mission, alongside London and Manchester. Nadine Halabi of Dubai Business Women Council addressed IBWC 2014 delegates at Belfast's Waterfront Hall today and highlighted the steps the UAE has made with regards to empowering women in business.

The Bank of America and Vital Voices Global Ambassador programme is a week-long mentorship event, which has this year been brought to Belfast specifically to coincide with IBWC 2014. A group of global mentors and mentees discuss the importance of women business leaders in a recovering global economy, and the ways that men and women can work together to harness their full potential and create growth and opportunity for all.

Today's IBWC 2014 programme featured keynote addresses and panel discussions featuring influential business people including Stephanie Akkaoui-Hughes, Founder of AKKA Architects & Action Lab; Anna-Lise Kjaer, Danish futures expert; Shaa Wasmund, Founder & CEO of Smarta.com and Board Member of Treat Ticket and Helena Morrissey CBE, founder of the Thirty Percent Club.

Minister for Department of Enterprise, Trade & Investment Arlene Foster MLA and Minister for Employment and Learning Stephen Farry helped open today's IBWC 2014 proceedings.

Kate Marshall, Chair of IBWC 2014 hosts Women in Business NI said, "Following a very successful first day at IBWC 2014, we were delighted to welcome two further groups of influential international business women to our group of delegates today. Reaching out and connecting with key business people from across the globe opens minds and opportunities – and ultimately drives economic growth."

IBWC 2014 is culminating with a Gala Dinner at Titanic Belfast on Wednesday evening.

IBWC 2014 is supported by Visit Belfast, Invest Northern Ireland, Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister, Department for Employment and Learning, Belfast City Council, Ulster Bank, NYSE Euronext, Queen's University Belfast, Equality Commission NI, Enterprise Ireland. Full information is available at www.ibwc2014.com