

SISTER REPUBLICS BUILDING BRIDGES 2012 AN ACTION PLAN FOR WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP

Summary of Conference

OPENING REMARKS (Ambassador Beyer)

Greetings from U.S. and Swiss Leaders:

Melanne Verveer (U.S. Ambassador-At-Large for Global Women's Issues)

The struggle for gender equality continues. While the Swiss have made great strides, the "glass ceiling" remains and a lot of work remains to be done. Women are underrepresented on councils, in the boardroom, in positions of power. According to the WEF Gender gap report, countries where the gender gap is smaller are more prosperous. Accordingly, **gender equality is smart economics**. Notably, in no country is that gap completely closed. When women make progress, all of society makes progress. In the U.S., investing in women is the smart, strategic thing to do. As part of the National Action plan, the U.S. Government needs to take specific steps to ensure women are equal partners. Women need to get involved in their own action plan - start and run businesses, run for office, provide community leadership to help other women.

Corina Casanova (H.E. Federal Chancellor)

Gave a detailed biography of Vira Boardman Whitehouse, a leader in the 1913 N.Y. suffrage movement and instrumental in the passage of the amendment permitting women the right to vote. For a time, she lived in Berne and forged strong relations with the Swiss leaders. In June 1918, she led six Swiss newspapers on an initial visit to the United States. This was a turning point in the Swiss perception of the United States. Switzerland was at the crossroads of international diplomacy and public opinion. Switzerland offered potential to the U.S. to influence public opinion in Europe. Whitehouse established a new kind of diplomacy characterized by a policy of openness and diplomacy. She laid the foundation for President Woodrow Wilson's Committee on Public Information. In 1919 he won the Nobel Peace Prize for establishing the League of Nations and his efforts to end World War I. She paved the way for peace and helped develop the relationship between Switzerland and the US. She built a bridge of understanding, established a deeper meaning to "Sister Republics" and is an inspiration for the Action Plan for Women's Leadership.

THE CHANGING ROLE OF WOMEN

Dr. Rebecca M. Blank (Acting Deputy Secretary of Commerce and Under Secretary for Economic Affairs)

Today, women are still powerless. EDUCATION: **Education is the route from powerlessness to public voice**. The research is clear. We must educate girls as well as boys. In the U.S. women obtain 60% of the college degrees. They are more likely to attend college, complete college and attend graduate programs. Single mothers in lower end jobs are most likely to be poor because they do not have the choices more educated women have. In Switzerland, based on a 2008 study, 21% of women attend college or university programs. This is greater than

their German or French counterparts. Education is crucial. LABOR MARKET: In 2011, 68% of women are in the labor force in the U.S. 76% of women are in the labor force in Switzerland. 57% of Swiss women work part-time but many of them in lower skilled labors. 25% of the female labor market in the U.S. work part-time. Women that work part-time in fields of law, medicine, science, business, politics, and economics, are able to do so as a result of anti-discrimination laws that forced equal treatment by gender. In the area of self-employment, women are under-represented. 30% of business owners are women. PERSONAL CHOICES LINKED TO JOB CHANGES: It is clear that women are marrying later, having children later, staying single longer, becoming single parents, etc. These choices are linked to changes in the landscape of the women's job market. We must expand women's roles in politics to effect the change we need. Girls have to be ambitious about what they can do. The labor market must be more open to women, with no discrimination and with family friendly policies. We must encourage women to be path breakers, to take jobs in engineering, science, politics, business and areas that are traditionally male dominated. As powerful women, we have a responsibility to serve as mentors and coaches.

OUR CONFERENCE APPROACH (Megan Beyer, Conference Chair)

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS (Susan Elbow, Deputy Chief of Mission, introduces:)

Judith McHale (CEO Discovery Network, Former US Under Secretary of State)

Women Moving Up - Can we really do it? Women must be a full and active part in every level of society. It is important to increase the number of women in leadership positions, but the progress has been slow. Too few women are in executive positions and on boards. It is a culture that needs to be changed. (Personal story about experiences at NYC law firm). As CEO of the Discovery Network, she built a gender balanced workforce, programs for flextime, telecommuting, job sharing, etc. **Companies that invest in employees are rewarded with above market returns.** FEMALE ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS: Are we holding ourselves back? How do we change the dynamic? Cheryl Sanders, COO Facebook identified the "ambition gap" - women holding themselves back from success. Women have the attitude "If you think I was ready, you would ask me", where men apply for more senior positions with no affirmation from above. We need to understand these dynamics, implement mentoring programs, networking, motivational speakers to encourage women to "raise their hands". According to a report from Virginia Tech, women consistently performed lower than males in a small group setting. They hold back from expressing opinions until they have a better sense of the room. Great ideas are lost. Opportunities to move up are lost. Training plays a critical role in teaching women to claim their fair share of credit and limelight and to speak up. Strong social, cultural norms and economic situations contribute to the unequal treatment of women. Women need to develop skills and behaviors to implement change (example: Discovery developed a workforce to reflect the markets they were serving). The challenges are daunting, but we must be ever vigilant and ever vocal. We can implement real and substantial change

Isabelle Welton (IBM, Country General Manager for Switzerland)

Works part-time and job shares. *Ten Things You Wish You Knew.*

1. Get candid feedback. It is the best opportunity to learn and works if you treat it as a gift.
2. Trust your gut freely. You will know if the decision is right.
3. Figure out what you won't compromise on and stick to it. What is your invisible line in the sand?

4. Never ever don't have time. Make the time. It is a question of priorities.
 5. Read, read, read.
 6. Kill them with Kindness. If someone is aggressive, smile.
 7. Nice Girls Finish Last. Be kind, but it is okay to make enemies.
 8. Water flows where it meets the least deviation. Sometimes, you just have to get out of the way.
 9. Be yourself. Be authentic.
 10. Reflect. Have a walkabout to reflect and recognize early warning signs.
- Most importantly, maintain your family.

WORK GROUP TOPICS AND OVERVIEW OF "GENDER EQUALITY IN EMPLOYMENT: POLICY AND PRACTICES IN THE U.S. AND SWITZERLAND"

Michelle Kelso, (PhD Assistant Professor of Human Services, Sociology and International Affairs, GWU) *Summary of results of the Gender Equality Study performed by GWU.* In both Switzerland and the US there is a gender wage gap. In Switzerland, women are over represented in low-paid jobs while women at the top of the job hierarchy earn less than men at the same level. In the U.S. women earn about 77% of men's earnings, although the wage gap is decreasing. The largest gender wage gap is in the financial services industry. Swiss men and women are more supportive of gender equality than are American men and women. Swiss men do not believe that being a parent has affected their career, whereas Swiss women believe being a parent has affected their career. According to the GW Building Bridges Survey, 61% of men did not believe that barriers existed for women to reach top levels of management, while 73% of women believed there were obstacles due to their gender. While men felt more strongly against quotas than women, neither wanted to see gender mandates legislated into policy. More research is needed to determine regional differences.

CERTIFICATION: Nicole Schwab (Co-Founder, The Gender Equality Project)

While there has been progress, progress is slow. What mechanism can drive change and accelerate progress? Certification brings increased transparency and accountability and tracks progress. On the national level, France has a national certification system, as does Mexico and some other countries. There is interest to bring this to a global level, particularly to international companies. Some key indicators are: (a) equal pay for equivalent work, (b) recruitment and promotion, (c) training, leadership development, and mentoring, (d) flexible work models and parental leave, and (e) company culture. It is also important to understand employee views. We must compare the answers of men and women so as to identify and understand the gaps. Where we are: we have the methodology in place, we have established the standards, and we have a community of companies applying for Certification.

FLEXIBLE WORK MODELS: Irenka Krone-Germann (Author, Part-time Employment in Switzerland)

In Switzerland, 57% of women work part-time, 13% of men work part-time. The most educated women work part-time and suffer a 20% salary difference from their male counterparts. There is a tendency in Switzerland for women to be stocked in the secondary markets which means they hold the lower wage "bad" part-time jobs. One of the solutions is job sharing - - while there are many prejudices (note *Die Weltwoche* picture and caption), it is our obligation as women to start an information campaign on the benefits of job-sharing.

THE PRICE OF MOTHERHOOD: Anne Crittenden (Author, *The Price of Motherhood*) *How do we bring children up without bringing women down?* In one US study of 87 occupations, women earned 20% less in every single occupation. This is a job interruption issue. Here are some statistics: Women in the UK are entitled to 52 weeks of partial parental leave. The Swiss get 14. Women in the US have no mandatory paid parental leave. They can get up to 12 weeks unpaid leave, but only two States, California and NJ, have mandated a paid 6 week leave. 42% of first time moms rely on unpaid leave but those who need it the most (the less educated) don't get it. They are often forced to quit so they can take care of a new baby. 25% of single mothers slide into poverty at the birth of their first child. Sick leave is also not a mandatory part of the employment package. Connecticut is the first state to require state sick leave. Government pensions are another area where women are discriminated against. Most women are penalized for retirement, either because of job interruption issues, or because women decide to work part-time to spend time raising their family. This translates into significant differences in pensions. **The penalty for motherhood is no money for retirement.** Finally, childcare is very decentralized and not dependent on a federal system. There is enormous demand for childcare and federal standards need to be imposed.

MENTORING: Nia Joyson-Romanzina (Head of Global Diversity & Inclusion, Swiss Reinsurance Company) *Mentoring: Why it is not working:* There is a clear disparity between men and women's mentoring relationships. Men are not being mentored, they are being *sponsored*. This is a natural relationship which develops on a personal and strategic level. Men are looking after other men in the boardroom, at promotion time, at the strategic management meetings. Women are less aware of the values of building strategic relationships to further their careers. Men are more aware of the P.I.E. acronym: Performance, Image, Exposure. **The further you get in your career, the less performance matters. The more your image and exposure matter.** Also, female mentors don't often have the organizational influence needed to advance their careers. So many promotions are based on building relationships with other people. Women are master networkers and social organizers. We need to ask more favors. We need to be more strategic. Mentors give feedback and advice. Sponsors advocate for their protégé, get the protégé visibility, fight to get their protégé to the next level. We all know meritocracies do not exist in their pure form. There are far more men in upper management and executive positions. Women need sponsors from men as well as women if they are going to get into a position to one day be a sponsor. We need to make this happen.

QUOTAS: Irene Natividad (Chair, International Corporate Directors, Global Women's Summit) According to a study on the Percentage of Women Directors, Regional Comparison, currently 8 countries, Norway(2003), Spain(2007), Iceland(2010), France (2010), Netherlands(2011), Italy (2011), and Belgium (2011), have legislation requiring varying percentages of corporate board seats be held by women in companies listed in various stock exchanges. **The mandatory quota is opening the door. You still have to perform.** The best way to promote quotas is to show that when the number of women on a board is increased, the financial success and profitability of the company increases. We need to write this into the corporate governance code, have board diversity language in the code.

WORK GROUPS – REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

FLEXIBLE WORK MODELS: Sylvie Hoffman (Deputy Regional Coordinator for the USA, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs)

Report: We have many hurdles to overcome. We need to change company culture. We need to change the concept of pay for function rather than pay for hours. Work output does not equal hours worked. We need to build trust and transparency so that working from home is not met with cynicism or suspicion. Part-time work has a negative connotation. There is more to flexible work and job sharing. Usually the employer receives about 110% work rather than the 100% performed by one person. We need to develop job sharing teams, i.e. pools of people with flexible hours. We need strong evaluation and feedback.

Recommendations: Use job sharing more. Have everyone experience flexible working concepts, not just women. Men should also be encouraged to pursue part-time work opportunities.

CERTIFICATION: Christine Maier (News Anchor 10 vor 10, Schweizer Fernsehen)

Report: Certification is expensive, but provides an added value for a company in its ability to retain and attract talent and manage its risk of lawsuits. The transparency of wages is a good thing. And it is sexy to be on a list. This sparks competition for top talent, donations, sponsors, etc. Certification can measure salary, recruitment, promotion, training and flexible work arrangements. The first step is to impose equal salary requirements.

Recommendations/Commitments: Astri Kimball agreed to share the idea of offering a prize or having a contest for recognition with the White House. Nestle (Dr. Ronit Lahav-le Coutre ?) agreed to see if certification is a possibility**, and Ellen Moran agreed to work with a contact at *Forbes* and *Working Mother* magazines to identify and profile 10 companies who are working toward certification or at least attaining some of the goals of certification. **

**my notes are not clear on these commitments

PRICE OF MOTHERHOOD: Susan Ness (CEO, Susan Ness Strategies)

Report: The U.S. and Switzerland are very different. There is very disparate decision making within both countries for school systems and childcare.

Recommendations: First, the US and Switzerland have to exchange best practices regarding flex time and child care. Second, both men and women need to advocate for flex time – this needs to be a grass roots movement with CEO support. Third, we need more collection of data. Fourth, we need tax credits for child care. Fifth, we need more affordable and quality child care. Last, we need to look at how public and private child care differ.

MENTORING: Vincenza Trivigno (Executive V.P., Stadler Rail AG)

Report: The responsibility is with us to build up relationships with a purpose, inside and outside a company. We need to be strategic in building our network. We need to raise awareness of the issue with platforms.

Recommendations: Use the social media to raise the issue and create a “call for action”. Influence the executive search companies to put women’s name on their lists for executives. Women in executive positions have an obligation to sponsor women, promote women and raise awareness and communicate the message.

QUOTAS: Eleanor Tabi Haller Jorden, (General Manager for Europe, Catalyst)

Report: We need fact based information to debunk the myths about women’s goals, competency, training, etc. – quantitative and qualitative. Metrics tied to empowerment are a formula for success.

Recommendations: We need to challenge stereotypes and find out what is driving these assessments and getting in the way of women’s success. Don’t treat the symptom. We need to capture the emotional stories and insights to drive the agenda forward. The discussion needs to be well balanced, well informed and well articulated. We need to address board readiness strategically. Women need to be part of the network, talent needs to be publicized. We need to profile quality and diversity of talent. Quotas have a negative connotation. We need to communicate the package as an opportunity to realize the business impact, use the social media platform. There needs to be top down leadership and accountability as well as bottom up grass roots movement.

CLOSING REMARKS – Melody Barnes (Former Domestic Policy Advisor to President Obama)

If our goal is long-term, broad based prosperity, this will not happen while half the workforce is constrained. We face many challenges, workplace flexibility among them. (Personal anecdote) Education is and continues to be important. (Cites statistics from Obama administration regarding college graduates). Women with high levels of education are more likely to have workplace flexibility. This can be a catalyst for change. Girls and women have the opportunity to succeed. For lesser educated women, working should not be incompatible with being a mother. If work place flexibility policies are taken to scale, it will help the overall economy. It can not be disputed, our economic growth will continue to increase if the work force talent is allowed to be flexible.

CLOSE OF CONFERENCE