

Making a Difference Through Leadership and Action

Dear BPW Presidents and Members worldwide,

As the 2016 year starts, I extend my best wishes to all of you for continuing success in all your endeavours. During this year, BPW International will continue with its 85th Anniversary Celebration until the 26th of August, the anniversary of the day our Federation was founded in 1930. Federations and Affiliates have been holding special events and festivities to celebrate this milestone all around the world, bringing awareness to the accomplishments we have reached during these years.

While we have reached many goals, there are many others we must continue to pursue in our quest for gender equality. Although there have been many improvements, we need to increase our efforts to achieve economic sustainability as well as women's political and social status. We need to use strong advocacy to claim our rightful place in decision making roles in the business and the professions, in politics and in society. Our theme, ***Making a Difference Through Leadership and Action*** serves as an inspiration and a challenge to make the necessary improvements we aim for as a leading woman's organization.

We have recorded many accomplishments this past year thanks to the efforts of our members. Our participation in the business world, the professions and in the political arena has increased our visibility and impact. Several new projects have been started and others are continuing successfully. Our membership has been increased with almost a dozen new Affiliate Clubs and we are preparing to add new federations and continue every possible effort to increase our membership.

2016 brings us many opportunities to meet and work together. We will have the Leaders' Summit, Clare Fulcher Dinner and CSW60 in New York as well as four of the five BPW Regional Conferences: Asia Pacific, Europe, Africa and Latin America.

Each of us needs to work actively to raise the level and impact of our advocacy. It is important that we keep working with our governments to influence legislation for the improvement to the standard of living for women and youth, as well as to ensure female participation at peace discussion tables. We must achieve equality for women in all ways of life. We will strengthen the work with our partner organizations and with the United Nations, as well as provide support to the members' initiated projects around the world.

International Federation of Business & Professional Women

Founded in 1930, BPW International empowers Business and Professional Women in over 98 countries on 5 continents with General Consultative Status at ECOSOC/United Nations.

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In honour of our beloved Past International President Dr. Livia Ricci we will extensively promote the Friends Programme anticipating, with your help, to raise a record of supporting members.

In order for us to achieve our aims we need to pool our resources. Every member should be involved in our goals and efforts. We all should be willing to actively support and work in unison in our initiatives and programs so we can effectively ***Make a Difference Through Leadership and Action.***

As we light the candles in our special Candle Lighting Ceremony, let us be inspired to continue our mission - the mission BPW International has had for 85 years: to bring Equality for Women around the world.

With my warmest regards,

Dr. Yasmin Darwich
International President
(2014-2017)