

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Carol Hanlon Returns Home from APEC Women in Economy Forum in St Petersburg, Russia**



Carol Hanlon, CEO Belmont BEC / TCFWA with Susan Jones, Asia Pacific Director / BPW International and (foreground) Hillary Clinton, US Secretary of State.

Carol Hanlon, CEO of non-profit organisations Belmont Business Enterprise Centre Inc. (BEC) and Textile Clothing Footwear Resource Centre of WA Inc (TCFWA), was invited to join the Australian Government delegation for the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Women and the Economy Forum in St Petersburg Russia, between the 28<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of June 2012. There were only 4 delegates that were invited from across Australia from the private and public sector.

The APEC event involved the 21 member countries from the Pacific Rim and focus on Women and Small Business.

Ms Hanlon said of the International Forum, "It was pleasing to note that a number of my suggested comments to Australian Government Office of Women, were included in the Australian statement and are now included in the final APEC statement. There was a major increase in focus in micro enterprise development for women."

"It was also thrilling to be able to attend Catherine Palace for the APEC official reception, and be seated only a table away from U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton." Ms Hanlon said.

Hillary Clinton announced two new APEC initiatives to expand women's access to capital and markets:

- To help governments use their purchasing power to support women entrepreneurs and grow their economies (which is the Global Platform Sourcing from Women Vendors that Belmont BEC & TCF WA are promoting)
- To train central and commercial banks throughout the Asia Pacific in inclusive lending practices so that women can access finance and capital

Ms Hanlon also had the opportunity to present Business Professional Women (BPW) Business Incubator Project information to the Senator the Hon Jacinta Collins at a APEC briefing session. Senator the Hon Jacinta Collins is the Australian Government Parliamentary Secretary for School Education and Workplace Relations

APEC encourages economies to conduct a comprehensive review of women's economic role and contribution, as well as of current programs and policies that exist to further women's economic participation. This includes an analysis of women's participation in innovation, business and social aspects of the economy, particularly through the collection of gender-

disaggregated data. The goal is to help identify the main growth drivers for equitable economic enhancement and methods for progressively balanced development in the region.

Recommendations put forward to help APEC economies to include:

- Harnessing the business and innovation potential of women and girls;
- Holistically assessing and analyse gender dynamics in business opportunities in APEC economies, and promoting women's leadership, greater job and entrepreneurship opportunities, and women's overall economic participation;
- Advancing public-private initiatives that can support women's full and active participation in the labor market and increase productivity

The next APEC event in 2013 will be held in Indonesia.

For further information:

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#### **Profile Belmont BEC and TCFWA**

Belmont BEC provides small business assistance with training and mentoring, networking and advisory to those wishing to start a small business or growing an existing business. TCFWA assists designers and fashion industry with specialist business skills development, linkages in the global supply chain, trade and industry networks, coordinates village sewing projects and facilitates a TCF Global network. Both organisations have assisted over 10,000 women in small business not only locally and but nationally through online virtual business incubation.



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