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The Global Gender Gap Report 2010

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The Global Gender Gap Report 2010 is published by the World Economic Forum. The Global Gender Gap Index 2010 is the result of collaboration with faculty at Harvard University and the University of California, Berkeley.

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The terms *country* and *nation* as used in this report do not in all cases refer to a territorial entity that is a state as understood by international law and practice. The term covers well-defined, geographically self-contained economic areas that may not be states but for which statistical data are maintained on a separate and independent basis.

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Preface

KLAUS SCHWAB, Founder and Executive Chairman, World Economic Forum

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We are at a unique turning point in history. Never before has there been such momentum around the issue of gender parity on the global stage. Numerous multinational companies have aligned core elements of their businesses and products to support and provide opportunities for women in the communities in which they are active. The United Nations has created a new entity for gender equality and the empowerment of women. There is a strong movement around greater investment in girls' education in the developing world. Businesses around the world are starting to take into account the increasing power of women consumers. As women begin to make up more than half of all university graduates in much of the developed world, there is an increased consciousness that this talent must be given the opportunity to lead. Several countries have introduced legislation that mandates minimum requirements for women's participation, in both business and politics.

The World Economic Forum has been among the institutions at the forefront of driving this change in mindset, primarily by emphasizing the message that gender gaps have an impact on competitiveness and by engaging the business community. Measuring the size of the problem is a prerequisite for identifying the best solutions. Through the *Global Gender Gap Reports*, for the past five years, the World Economic Forum has been quantifying the magnitude of gender-based disparities and tracking their progress over time. By providing a comprehensive framework for benchmarking global gender gaps, the *Report* reveals those countries that are role models in dividing resources equitably between women and men, regardless of their level of resources. In 2008, we launched our Global Gender Parity Group and Regional Gender Parity Groups in Latin America, the Middle East, Africa and Asia. To date, these multi-stakeholder communities of highly influential leaders—50% women and 50% men—from business, politics, academia, media and civil society have jointly identified the biggest gaps in each region, based in part on the findings of this *Report*, and have collectively committed to strategies to improve the use of female talent. The Global Agenda Council on the Gender Gap, an expert council, has used the insights of this *Report* to propose the creation of an online repository of information on best practices to close gaps in economic participation, education, health and political empowerment. There is also the impact we cannot measure—the countless universities, schools, researchers, media entities, businesses, governments and

individuals that use this *Report* as a resource for their work.

We would like to express our deep appreciation to Ricardo Hausmann, Director, Center for International Development, Harvard University and Laura D. Tyson, S.K. and Angela Chan Professor of Global Management University of California, Berkeley, USA for their invaluable contribution to this *Report*. We would also like to thank Yasmina Bekhouche for her research assistance and Marc Cuénod and Eimear Farrell for their support on this project at the World Economic Forum.

The Global Gender Gap Index was created with the specific purpose of being comparable across time. The 2010 *Report* aggregates five years of data and seeks to reveal country progress in a transparent manner. By doing this, we hope this *Report* will serve as a call to action to the international community to pool its knowledge and resources and to leverage the current unique window of opportunity so that faster progress can be achieved. Every moment that we wait entails colossal losses to the global society and economy.

