



During September 15-16, the Global Business Forum was held at The Biltmore hotel Tbilisi, organized by Georgia's Union of Business Ladies (UBL).

Featuring guest speakers from around the world, with government officials, potential investors, CEOs, business executives and entrepreneurs, the forum was said to be aimed at connecting the representatives of the world's top businesses and successful start-ups.

The Global Business Forum, "one of its kind in Georgia," hosted delegates from 17 countries including the UK, Greece, India, Czech Republic, Kazakhstan, UAE, Turkey, China and the US. Representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tbilisi City Hall and Tbilisi City Assembly were also present. H.E. Dr. Jasim Mohamed Al Qasemi, UAE Ambassador to Armenia, visited Georgia specifically to attend the Business Forum.

The two-day event focused on and covered topics ranging from women's roles in strengthening national economies, to challenges for businesses in the 21st century and the solutions needed to overcome them.

The presentations and panel discussion also included a debate regarding entrepreneurship, recent trends, and the existing business ethics of different countries, while the Georgian business environment, including various local and regional projects, was showcased during the forum, organized in partnership with the Bank of Georgia and the British-Georgian Chamber of Commerce.

“I’m extremely pleased that the Global Business Forum not only took place, but also achieved what it set out to do,” Ekaterine Maisuradze, President of the UBL and organizer of the forum, said.

“Since the forum was held for the first time ever, we were not expecting such participation and engagement, yet the main objective of the Business Forum was achieved. Participants were able to establish international connections, and share their experiences with each other,” she added. Maisuradze said she is proud that a lot of international partnerships were formed thanks to the event, and said that she hopes they will become even more successful and fruitful in future.

“The Union of Business Ladies team managed to showcase Georgia’s full business potential during the forum and at the same time unite many foreign guests in attendance. The International Business Forum has been successfully founded, and is to become a yearly event from now on,” the President of UBL stated, where it is expected to “have even larger international outreach”.

“As The Union of Business Ladies, we continue to actively work, support and empower women from the business sectors in Georgia. There were a lot of new initiatives discussed, and a lot of new ideas formed within the forum, and our aim is to strengthen and assist these newly established partnerships, before the new forum starts in 2018,” Maisuradze said.

“It is essential that the Bank of Georgia provide finances to innovative businesses,” said Zurab Masurashvili, Head of Micro and SME Banking Department at Bank of Georgia. “One of our four priorities is to support the business development of female entrepreneurs, so we are pleased to be co-organizers of an event where women entrepreneurs can connect and share experiences”.

“We are delighted that Britain was very well represented at the Forum,” said Mako Abashidze, Founder Director of the British-Georgian Chamber of Commerce. “We are looking forward to next year’s event, where it is hoped that all representing countries will come back to Georgia with more guest speakers and delegates. The forum is an excellent platform to promote British-Georgian relations and this year we had four speakers from Britain: Maggie Semple, owner of the Experience Corps LTD, Sophie Ibbotson, Founding Partner at Glacex LLP, entrepreneur and International Business consultant; Charlie Edwin-Dove, Founder of Suraci Research Group; Karen Tracey from Dunelm Business Consultants Ltd. And the H.E. UK Ambassador to Georgia Justin McKenzie Smith”.

A memorandum of understanding was signed between the UBL and the Qatari Business Women Association at The Biltmore hotel Tbilisi, as a part of the business forum. Ms. Maisuradze also granted honorary membership status for the UBL to women ambassadors in Georgia.