

Dear Lisa

Hello from the UK where nearly every day of the past two weeks has brought another dramatic twist in the contest for the leadership of the Conservative party and the Government, following the Brexit vote.

The latest breaking news is that Theresa May will take over as the next British prime minister on Wednesday after her only rival, Andrea Leadsom, pulled out of the race to become the next Tory party leader. Theresa May will follow in the footsteps of Margaret Thatcher who was Britain's first female Prime Minister until 1990.

26 years after Mrs Thatcher departed from Downing Street, 2016 appears to be a golden era for women in British politics. Besides Theresa May as Tory party leader and PM, Labour might get a female leader for the first time in its history after Angela Eagle launched her bid earlier this week to unseat Jeremy Corbyn. Meanwhile, Nicola Sturgeon is Scottish First Minister and leader of the SNP and Arlene Foster is leader of the Unionist Party and First Minister in Northern Ireland. If UKIP elects Diane James or Suzanne Evans to replace Nigel Farage and the Greens opt for another female leader after Natalie Bennett who is stepping down, we could be in a situation where the majority of Britain's political leaders are women, for the first time ever.

But have things really changed for women in British politics - or is it all just a historical accident?

Many pundits have observed that the Tory leader all-women shortlist came about only after the power games of the alpha males in the contest, Boris Johnson and Michael Gove, caused their leadership chances to implode.

The Labour party has quota structures in place to help get more women into power. Tony Blair's controversial adoption of all-women shortlists resulted in the biggest single influx of women MPs into Parliament in its history. Unlike Labour, the Conservatives do not have a quota system but there have been efforts going on behind the scenes for years to mentor talented women and get them into winnable seats through organisations like Conservative Women and Women2Win - which Theresa May founded.

It was also Theresa May who overhauled the candidate selection system to bring more women and minority ethnic MPs up the ladder which undoubtedly facilitated David Cameron - who has taken his share of stick for having a "problem" with putting women in top cabinet jobs - in overseeing a huge increase in female Tory MPs, from just 17 female Tory MPs ten years ago to the present number of 68.

It is easy to see the recent rise of women in British politics as a watershed moment - but overall, women are still under-represented in politics - men still outnumber women in Westminster by two to one - and the barriers preventing women from reaching the top are arguably just as high as they have ever been. The media focuses on their personal grooming and fashion sense in a way that would never happen to their male counterparts. Strong women are labelled as shrill and pushy. Ken Clarke came in for a lot of flack this week with his description of Theresa May as a "bloody difficult woman". Even if this was said in grudging admiration rather than with derision, the label is telling and underscores the entrenched gender stereotyping and biases that women still face.

At The Women's Foundation, we look forward to a point in time when women politicians are no longer remarkable for being women and susceptible to labeling of this nature. And we look forward to Mrs May inspiring women everywhere to set their aspirations on leadership.

Warm regards

Su-Mei Thompson  
 CEO, The Women's Foundation

## UPCOMING EVENTS



### TWF is proud to support #SheMeansBusiness

TWF is proud to be partnering with Facebook and the Faculty of Business and Economics of HKU to launch [#SheMeansBusiness](#), a global initiative providing training for local female entrepreneurs. The launch event will include remarks by Florence Hui/Under Secretary for Home Affairs, Jayne Leung/Facebook and Susan Hutchison/TWF Board Chair, TWF and a panel discussion moderated by Haidi Lun/Bloomberg News.

**DATE:** Monday, July 18, 2016

**RUNDOWN:**

10.00 a.m. - 12.00 p.m. Launch Ceremony

12.00 - 2.00 p.m. Buffet Lunch  
2.00 - 4.30 p.m. Workshop For Female  
Entrepreneurs  
**VENUE:** [Rayson Huang Theatre](#), The University  
of Hong Kong, Pokfulam  
[Click here to RSVP](#)



### Lunch with Henry Kravis, Co-Chairman and Co-Chief Executive Officer, KKR

TWF and the 30% Club HK are delighted to announce that Henry Kravis, Co-Chairman and Co-CEO at KKR, will be the special guest speaker at our next 30% Club lunch. Mr Kravis will speak about the current global investing environment and D&I considerations for business.

**DATE:** Wednesday, July 20, 2016

**TIME:** 12.00 - 2.00 p.m.

**VENUE:** The Asia Society Hong Kong Center, 9 Justice Drive, Admiralty

[Register Now](#)



### Save the Date! TWF Gala Dinner 2016

Mark your calendars for TWF's signature Gala Dinner featuring inspirational speakers, luxury prizes and live entertainment - stay tuned for more details!

**DATE:** Tuesday, November 15, 2016

**TIME:** From 7.00 p.m.

**VENUE:** JW Marriott Hotel, One Pacific Place, 88 Queensway

## TWF PROGRAMME UPDATES



### Mentoring Programme Booster Sessions

This month, TWF successfully co-organised two Mentoring Programme booster sessions with the Kering Group, providing a platform for both TWF and Kering Group mentors and mentees to share best practices and support each other.



### Girls Go Tech Visits Credit Suisse

Last Friday, TWF partnered with Credit Suisse to host an interactive IT workshop and company visit for 42 girls from Holy Trinity College, Pope Paul VI College and United Christian College, as part of our Girls Go Tech Programme. Thank you to the group of passionate Credit Suisse volunteers who assisted the girls with their IT project and provided them with career advice during the panel discussion and speed mingling session.

## IN THE COMMUNITY



### Nominations open for AmCham's Women of Influence Awards!

TWF is proud to support AmCham's Women of Influence Awards celebrating women, companies and male champions that are leading the way for gender equality. For nomination criteria and award descriptions, visit:

<http://www.amcham.org.hk/events/signature-events/2016-nomination>. Nominees can be any nationality but need to have a strong connection to Hong Kong. Anyone submitting a nomination before August 15 is also eligible for early bird Conference prices!

## EXTERNAL EVENTS

**TWF is delighted to be supporting the following events:**

## TWF FUNDRAISING INITIATIVES - We Would Love Your Support!

### FLAG DAY

CALL FOR SUPPORT



### Support TWF's First Ever Flag Day!

TWF is hosting our first-ever Flag Day and we are calling for volunteers to help in one of two ways: 1) Help with street sales of flags on Wednesday, July 20 from 7 a.m. - 12 p.m. in the New Territories or 2) Be a corporate ambassador and sell Gold flags at your office any time from now to end of August. Please click [here](#) for more information or email [flagday@twfhk.org](mailto:flagday@twfhk.org) to reserve an allocation of Gold flags.



### TWF Mischa Pins

To raise funds for our programmes, TWF is selling pins, specially designed for TWF by Michelle Lai - MISCHA founder. The beautiful black and gold enamelled pins featuring MISCHA's signature design can be purchased at TWF and partner events for HK\$50. We are looking for volunteers to help us with selling pins within their organisations and networks. Please contact Stephanie Ko at [stephanie.ko@twfhk.org](mailto:stephanie.ko@twfhk.org) to find out more.

## WHAT WE'RE READING

**Our top picks for recommended reading and listening on the key trends and breaking stories about women and gender:**

- [Schools Tackling Sexual Violence Should Focus On Boys](#) (The Guardian)
- [Lack Of Role Models Keeps Women Out Of Cyber Security](#) (Financial Times)
- [To Seem Confident, Women Have To Be Seen As Warm](#) (Harvard Business Review)
- [Young Women Are Still Less Likely To Negotiate A Job Offer. But Why?](#) (The Washington Post)
- [All These Countries Have Had A Female Head Of State \(Before The U.S.\)](#) (Time Money Magazine)
- [Meet The Women Who Are Breaking The Wine Glass Ceiling, As Critics, Makers And More](#) (SCMP)

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