

Coming together is a beginning
Keeping together is progress
Working together is success

Dear BPW members, as a friend calls us, Captains of the world!
It is an honour and it gives me great pleasure to be with you this evening.
It is a historical evening since we are gathered here,
in the beautiful city of Basel, for the solemn signing of the twinning agreement
between BPW Nicosia and BPW Basel and at this very moment we are about to
receive the first rewards from this partnership.

Twinning is not an aim in itself but a means.

Is so much more than a protocol agreement or an act of formal public relations.
Twinning marks the beginning of a future of cooperation,
mutual support and knowledge, transferred at the economic, spiritual, cultural
and social level.

Despite the geographical distance of 3, 339, 7 kilometers,
cross-border communication enables us to create
and further enrich common goals.
Through these relations, we achieve common aims and objectives based on
understanding and solidarity and embark on a journey of cooperation.

We will share good practices, learn from each other,
exchange experiences, share knowledge;
will learn about one another's history and culture,
promote BPW's aims of equality, support the interchange of development peace
and opportunities for all.

Through the exchange of experiences and activities
we will strive to do our best at whatever task is at hand.

All these and more, I am sure, we will achieve together.
Twinning is a formal bond of friendship
and tonight we are celebrating the cross cultural relationship that is being
created between BPW Nicosia and BPW Basel but more importantly we are
celebrating the friendships that have emanated from the relationship
that brings people together, people from different backgrounds, different age
groups and different languages.

It all started in Munich.
In the streets of Munich on the way to the European Congress back in 2009.

Since Marianna Vrahimi and I did not know the exact location of the congress we
decided to follow some ladies holding the same congress bags with us.
We were talking in Greek.
Suddenly one of the ladies that we were following turn to say "You speak
Greek" ...
Georgia Bross was her name ...
That was the beginning ...
A year later on September 12 2010 we met again,

this time in Greece, for the launching of a new Club,
that of BPW Athens, which BPW Nicosia proudly helped to create and which
today is writing its own chapter in the history of Business and Professional
Women.

As Victor Hugo said “nothing is as powerful as an idea whose time has come”.

It's almost a year since September 11th 2014
the day we signed the first part of the Certificate of Agreement in Nicosia,
the capital of Cyprus, situated in the heart of the Island.
The ancient kingdom of Ledra.
The only divided city in Europe.
A division forced upon us by the Turkish invasion in 1974.
A shame and symbolic wound in the vision of a United Europe.

We promised on that day to “fight the good fight”,
to be the ambassadors for the kind of world we want to live in.
To face the rising poverty with hope, trust and solidarity.
To lift our eyes beyond the economic crisis of today,
to the hopes of tomorrow.

June 22nd 2015
Tonight we draw the final roadmap to walk a journey together.

We can do it!! Yes Together we can do it!

We have the inspiration and strength to go on working for the future – to make a
Difference through Leadership and Action building on BPW International's solid
foundation.

I'd like to close my speech by singing a song – but – as close friends know I can't
sing.
The song though is a great one....
It talks about your confidence, your trust and the ability and the integrity you
must possess – those of you
those of us – who are strong

So let's lift up our glasses and as the song goes on to say
“Here's to the winners –
Here's to the glory still to be
Here's to the battle, whatever it's for.
To ask the best of ourselves,
Then give much more.
Here's to the miracles they make us see
Here's to the winners all of us can be.

Ladies thank you all for being here tonight.

Thank you for sharing this special evening with us