

BUSINESS & ECONOMICS SCHOOL LECTURERS JOIN THE EXPERT GROUP MEETING (EGM) ON WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN DECISION MAKING OF THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ISLAMIC CONFERENCE (OIC)

On 21st to 22nd January 2008, there was an Expert Group Meeting (EGM) On Women's Participation in Decision Making of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) which was held at Renaissance Hotel, Kuala Lumpur. The Group Meeting was attended by two participants from UMS; namely Dr. Hj. Arsiah Bahron and Dayangku Aslinah Abd. Rahim, both are the lecturers from Business & Economics School. Almost 30 Islamic countries around the world have sent their representatives in the Group Meeting. Besides Malaysia, among the participants' countries are Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Brunei, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Maldives, Oman, Pakistan, Palestine, Qatar, Senegal, Sudan, Turkey, UAE and Yemen. The 2-day Group Meeting was launched by Dato' Sri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil, Minister of Women, Family and Community Development Malaysia which in her speech said that Malaysia is now reaching the policy of at least 30 percent participation of women in decision-making positions at all level (which has been agreed upon internationally in the Beijing platform of Action, 1995). She proudly announced that in Malaysia, women in top management positions in the public sector have increased

from 18.1 percent in 2004 to 26.0 percent in 2007. Among the objectives of Group Meeting are to provide a forum to discuss issues related to women's participation in decision making and to recommend significant initiatives and strategies for the enhancement of women's participation in decision making. The two day Group Meeting were full with plenary sessions (panel discussion), working groups' session and Drafting Committee Meeting. A lot of listening to the distinguished speakers on the first day of the program, however all participants had a lot of opportunities to present their own views and opinions during concurrent session of 2 working groups at the second day of the Group Meeting. One resolution entitled 'Kuala Lumpur Recommendations for the Enhancement of the women's Participation at Decision-Making Level in OIC Member

States' has been presented at the closing plenary at the end of the 2-day Group Meeting, which was chaired by Datuk Faizah Mohd. Tahir, Secretary General, Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development. The recommendation will be presented upon at the subsequent OIC Meeting held at international level. It is a hope that 'Kuala Lumpur Recommendations' will help to reduce the gap between men and women in decision-making processes, and will resolve the issue of gender inequality and women oppression among the Islamic countries around the world.

