

Press Release

Dame Helen Alexander and Laurence Parisot on the development of gender diversity in the business context

London, 17 March – Two exceptional women with extraordinary career paths will talk and share anecdotes from their own experiences as women evolving in a masculine work environment, particularly as former 'Boss of the bosses' and 'Patronne des patrons' in their respective and coinciding roles of President of the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) and President of Mouvement des Entreprises de France (MEDEF).

Dame Helen Alexander is chairman of UBM plc, the Port of London Authority (PLA) and Incisive Media. She is also deputy chairman of Esure Group Holdings, a non-executive director of Rolls-Royce Group plc, and senior adviser to Bain Capital. Dame Helen was Chief Executive of the Economist Group till 2008; then became President of the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) between 2009 and 2011.

Laurence Parisot was President of MEDEF (Mouvement des Entreprises de France) from 2005 to 2013. She is a member of the Economic, Social and Environmental Council, and a Board member for BNP Paribas, Michelin, Coface and Fives-Lille. Since August 2013, she has had a weekly radio slot on Europe 1.

Moderated by Simon Walker, Director General of the Institute of Directors, the conversation between these two women and later the audience will explore issues pertinent to every business:

- Approaches to quotas in France and the UK
- Regulation vs. mindset
- Cultural issues
- Questions on paternity leave and childcare
- The role of women leaders in promoting women

The event will take place on **Tuesday 18 March at the Institute of Directors**, the influential and respected UK membership organisation, (see below)

-ENDS-

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Note to Editors

About the French Chamber

The French Chamber of Commerce in Great Britain is the largest foreign chamber in the UK in terms of both turnover and range of services offered. Our main aims are to provide a platform of exchange and networking at the service of the Franco-British firms in the UK, to promote our 600 members' interests to key decision makers and to help develop economic and commercial relations between France and the UK. Our Business Consultancy and Implantation departments provide both British and French companies with a large range of bespoke professional services. The 50 events we organise a year, with personalities from the British and French political and business worlds, offer great opportunities for our members to develop their business and expand their network of contacts. Additionally, the Forums and the Clubs we have launched over the past two years, focusing on issues or sectors including Human Resources, Climate Change, Cross-Cultural Relations, Finance, Legal, Luxury and SMEs & Entrepreneurs, offer our members dedicated platforms to exchange experiences at the highest level of management and to share best practice.

About The Institute of Directors

The Institute of Directors (IoD) was founded in 1903. It is a non-party political organisation with approximately 38,000 members in the United Kingdom and overseas. Membership includes directors from right across the business spectrum – from media to manufacturing, and from e-business to the public and voluntary sectors. The IoD provides an effective voice to represent the interests of its members to key opinion-formers at the highest levels. These include Government ministers and their shadows, parliamentary committee members, senior civil servants and think-tanks. IoD policies and views are actively promoted to the national, regional and trade media. The IoD offers a wide range of business services which include business centre facilities (15 UK centres and one in Paris), conferences, networking events, virtual offices, issues-led guides and literature, as well as free access to business information and advisory services.