

## **Webinar Highlights: Fall and Winter 2017**

Did you miss these thought-provoking fall webinars? Access to the full presentations can be purchased at <http://www.owit.org/programs/store>. Here a few take-aways:

### ***Leave No One Behind – A Discussion of Women’s Economic Empowerment – October 2017***

Presenter: Simona Scarpaleggia, CEO, Ikea, and Co-Chair, UN High Level Panel on Women’s Economic Empowerment

The UN Secretary General launched this high level panel in order to accelerate achieving SDG #5 on gender and provide concrete tools to facilitate it and to gather people from all walks of life to contribute. The panel focuses on the world of work and -identified reasons for persistent gaps in women’s opportunities. It Identified areas to address including providing role models; ensuring legal protection; redistributing unpaid work; building assets (financial and digital); changing business culture and practice; and improving public sector practices in employment and procurement. The panel has developed toolkits to help corporations and partners. See [www.womenseconomicempowerment.org](http://www.womenseconomicempowerment.org)

According to Scarpaleggi, empowerment has to be a collective phenomena and what counts is that efforts of the UN panel can be spread to all those who want to contribute to women’s economic empowerment. She emphasized the value of partnerships.

Missed the webinar? You can listen to a recording by clicking here:  
<http://www.owit.org/programs/details/webinars/130>.

### ***NAFTA: Rebuilding and Renegotiating – October 2017***

Presenters:

- Mary Estelle Ryckman, Former U.S. trade negotiator
- Carrie Goodge O'Brien, Counsellor (Trade Policy), Embassy of Canada, Washington D.C.
- Karen Antebi, Economic Counselor for the Trade and NAFTA Office at the Embassy of Mexico in Washington, D.C

Moderator: Angela Hofmann, Past President, OWIT International

The panelists discussed negotiations up to October and what can be expected from the upcoming rounds. Some of their remarks included:

#### ***Karen Antebi, Mexico***

- 14 million jobs in US depend on trade with Mexico and Canada
- 23 year old NAFTA is most ambitious FTA of its time – liberalized trade in goods (including agriculture), services and investment)
- It transformed Mexico and modernized plants to allow the country to compete successfully on the world stage
- Degree of uncertainty exists around the negotiations.

#### ***Carrie Goodge O'Brien, Canada***

- NAFTA was a revolutionary agreement when started in 1994, acting as a stimulus to open up world markets - now is a \$22 trillion market
- Objective: to facilitate cross border trade – still supports integration of NA economy and world’s most advanced supply chain
- Canada also wants to modernize NAFTA – to align it to new realities eg. technology changes, simplifying processes and harmonizing regulations, make it more progressive (including those groups formerly excluded so benefits are broadly shared)
- How to make more progressive – eg add gender rights chapter and trade, Indigenous people chapter and environmental protections
- In Canada, gender is a priority – want to use gender chapter in Canada Chile FTA and incorporate in NAFTA – incorporate a gender perspective, encourages and facilitates cooperative activities related to women’s economic empowerment, globalization of SMEs to share best practices, want a committee to look at trade and gender issues across NAFTA and how provisions affect women.
- Consultations this time have been more broad and robust – have seen more links this time between governors, orgs, etc in all 3 countries – coming together to discuss NAFTA and how to present common positions - OWIT can play a role in bringing messages down to local level – ie. stories of how individuals are benefiting from NAFTA are powerful stories.

**Mary Estelle Ryckman, U.S.** - retired but understands a lot about trade negotiations as she spent 30 years shaping global trade and investment policy.

- Outside of DC, there are several buckets: multinational corporations that know how to influence government and others aware of the process eg SMEs, farmers, women’s groups, labour groups, NGOs, etc. who try to influence talks but get frustrated. They often work with associations and talk to state and municipal reps.
- There is a public comment period. The best approach is to go from individual to a collective to influence.
- Trade affects everyone on a day-to-day basis and our economies have benefited eg computer costs reduced, blueberries and avocados available year round. These things are not well understand.
- There are challenges – positives are so diffused across economies whereas challenges/drawbacks are very concentrated.
- OWIT is a great organization and sessions like this do help to broaden understanding of these negotiations beyond Washington.

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<http://www.owit.org/programs/details/webinars/132>.

### ***Pirates of the Trade – October 2017***

Presenters:

- Olga Torres, founder and managing member, Torres Law, an international trade law firm in Dallas, Texas
- Evelyn Suero, an international business attorney who is the owner & principal attorney of Suero Law, PLC in Miami, Florida;

- Samantha Peaslee, an international business and intellectual property lawyer with Polaris Law Group in Longmont, Colorado

OWIT's small business sponsors and experts in international trade presented this webinar. Fitting for Halloween, our speakers shared horror stories about pitfalls to be avoided in the international trade arena and insights. The speakers sharing their stories and insights were.

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