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Interview with Sandra Boccia on 06/01/2014

Tânia Morales - Sandra Boccia, Editor in Chief of Pequenas Empresas Grandes Negócios magazine. Sandra, good afternoon.

Sandra Boccia - Good afternoon, Tânia. Good afternoon to the listeners to CBN.

Tânia Morales - Sandra is going to talk about the Women's Forum, an event in São Paulo held earlier this week. Incidentally, Sandra and I took part on it. It was very good, with international guests discussing women's issues. Very good, right, Sandra?

Sandra Boccia - The Women's Forum for the Economy and Society, right? It's called "*Davos for women*," Tânia. I mean, it's a platform for meetings around the world, and Brazil is part of it - it has a key position in the forum - because it is one of the countries chosen by the forum.

Besides Brazil, only France and Myanmar hold the forum, which was begun in 2005 to create an international meeting point for women's voices to be paid more attention to in different dimensions of society, Tânia.

It is to share views, to empower women to table issues that still cause a lot of trouble, especially in countries like Brazil, such as sexism, how entrepreneurship can help jumpstart the careers of women, and empower them financially, as well.

Men, of course, get together at soccer, they have a cigar, have a kick-about at the weekend, they get together after work and they network naturally.

This doesn't happen much with women, even with women executives, women entrepreneurs. They stay much more inside the company, in their areas, because they have children, because they have their parents. Women have this role of caregiver. So, there is a nucleus.

The foundation of this forum is to promote networking among women, so they can share their problems. It is a discussion platform. That's it, right?

Tânia Morales - Yes, it's interesting because there are many stories. Aside from issues that are more, shall we say, theoretical, which are under discussion, there are reports, interesting stories.

I'm not going to remember now, but there was a very interesting account of a black woman who rose from a lower social class. She told of the difficulty had and how much she needed to study and prove that she is indeed able to win the

market over, even more so because it was in computers, technology, something like that.

It's interesting to hear these stories. I imagine that for her, as well, to share her experiences, hear stories from other women, is also really an experience.

Sandra Boccia - She was an example, wasn't she, Tânia? Julie Katzman, one of the guests at the forum, who is the executive vice president of the International Development Bank, said something very important. She said that when it comes to female inclusion, you need to showcase leaders, show that there are women leaders so that other women can be inspired.

If you look around and you don't see other women leaders, how can you be inspired, to get to a good level for your growth, for your development?

I think this forum is very important for Brazil in particular. It is important for the world. Considering what we have heard in recent days, Tânia, this statement that caused uproar last week, the statement by Poland's Janusz Korwin-Mikke's, the new Member of the European Parliament, now with the voice of an MEP, saying that women should not have voting rights.

We are in the 21st century! Here in Brazil, we have a very short history of women's participation in politics, which is still low-level throughout Latin America, especially.

We only got the vote when Getúlio Vargas signed a decree. It was just over eight decades ago - 82 years. It is still a very short time that women have been involved in politics, although Brazil has some great examples, including a president.

Tânia Morales - I mean, we are still underrepresented in politics.

Sandra Boccia - We are still very underrepresented. So, she was there, Eleonora Menicucci, Minister for Public Policies for Women.

And also these examples of entrepreneurs who have had to struggle a lot, but when it is natural you shouldn't have to struggle so much. I mean, it's a question of opportunities, really.

When you think of Brazil, 52% of new ventures are less than 30 months old. They are called new by the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor - nascent ventures, which are being led by women.

But they do not necessarily represent a choice. There is still a great need. About 40% of women today - this was also said at the forum - begin their businesses out

of necessity in Latin America. But when we look at men, most become entrepreneurs after finding an opportunity on the market, which is ideal.

It is a very important platform. It was a great honor to hold it and to welcome all the guests, because people need to express their anxieties there, to table their challenges, to have a way to share.

As we have said, culturally in Brazil there is a space outside companies, outside families, which is reserved for men to exchange their views, to network. So, men are used to going to soccer, having a cigar, having friends, time with friends.

And women, who are seen very much as caregivers, still have demands from society, this expectation. Women take care of the children, they care for their parents, and they often end up out of the public debate to create policies that can help them, too.

This overcoming of barriers, creating new horizons and new opportunities, truly extending the world view of what happens in other societies, for women is especially rich. Right, Tânia?

Tânia Morales - Well, where will the next International Women's Forum be, Sandra?

Sandra Boccia - It will be in a beautiful town near Paris, called Deauville. It is the most important forum. One delegate there at the Women's Forum said: "Sandra, this here was great, but it was just an appetizer. Go to Deauville, a town near Paris, France, where it will take place in mid-October. "

Anyone who wants to take part, the Forum is open for registration. Stay tuned, because it is a very interesting place to listen to other opinions and to be heard by women, by men, in the name of a more just and equal society.

Tânia Morales - That's it, Sandra Boccia. Thank you, Sandra.

Sandra Boccia - Thank you, Tânia. Have a great week, and our listeners, too.

Tânia Morales - You, too. Sandra Boccia is editor in chief of Pequenas Empresas Grandes Negócios magazine. If you want to contact Sandra Boccia, about a specific topic related to entrepreneurship, which is her subject here on CBN, the email is: movimentoempreenda@cbn.com.br