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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FAWCO Celebrates International Women's Day with the *Join Me on the Bridge Campaign on March 8*

(March 2, 2012 – Bern, Switzerland) Friday, March 8, is International Women's Day and participants at FAWCO's biennial conference will celebrate by participating in Women For Women International's *Join Me on the Bridge* campaign, *Over the Aare on the Kornhausbrücke*, at noon, in Bern. This global act of solidarity was created to bring awareness to violence against women in war-torn countries. It all began in 2010 when the Country Directors of Women for Women's programs in Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo had an idea that became the impetus for this global campaign. These two countries have been torn apart by the worst atrocities of war that the world has seen in recent years, including the commonplace rape and torture of women as a weapon of war. In 2010, women from opposing sides of war in these communities came together on a bridge adjoining the two countries. These women met to say "No" to war and "Yes" to peace and to show that they could build bridges of hope for the future. In its first year over 20,000 people took part with 119 events in 19 countries. (www.womenforwomen.org)

Other conference activities to highlight International Women's Day include a morning address from U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva Betty E. King and an afternoon panel discussion entitled *Moving Mountains – Women and Politics: Switzerland*. The panel will be comprised of four women, all of whom are national-level, Swiss politicians - Claudine Esseiva, General Secretary of the FDP Women Switzerland, and National Council Members Margret Kiener Nellen, Christa Markwalder, and Barbara Schmid-Federer. Fritz Reimann, TV-Journalist at SRF Swiss Radio and Television, will serve as the moderator. Many empowering workshops will also be held throughout Friday on topics such as active aging, maternal health, climate change, local club strategies and repatriation.

Over 150 members are expected to participate in FAWCO's (Federation of Women's Clubs Overseas) Biennial Conference in Bern, Switzerland on March 6-10, 2013. Local and international speakers, will cover a variety of global and club-level issues. FAWCO has partnered with an outstanding group of sponsors to present this year's conference, including Emmi Group, Vontobel Swiss Wealth Advisors, Highmount, US Tax and Financial Services Group, Victorinox, Vonage, International Herald Tribune, Presence Switzerland, Gerda Spillmann Swiss Cosmetics, The Hess Collection and Clements Worldwide. Conference attendees will spend the week being briefed on a variety of issues facing Americans living abroad, receiving updates on FAWCO's global initiatives and participating in educational workshops. The 15,000 FAWCO members not attending the conference may view videos of sessions and speeches online via the FAWCO YouTube channel. Photos and newsletters will be posted daily, as well as PDF copies of presentations and handouts. Anyone can follow FAWCO on Twitter at @fawco, join the conference conversation using #fawco2013 or find FAWCO on Facebook. The full conference agenda as well as speaker biographies are available at www.fawco.org.

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Continued – FAWCO Celebrates International Women's Day with the Join Me on the Bridge Campaign

FAWCO is fortunate to have these businesses on board as main sponsors of this year's conference:

- **Emmi Group** is the largest Swiss milk processor and one of the most innovative premium dairies in Europe. In Switzerland, Emmi focuses on the development, production and marketing of a full range of dairy and fresh products as well as the production, ageing and trade of primarily Swiss cheeses.
- **Vontobel Swiss Wealth Advisors** is dedicated to the needs of U.S. investors. Registered as an Investment Adviser with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), we provide internationally diversified wealth management solutions to U.S. persons. We are based in Zurich, Switzerland, the world's capital of Private Banking.
- **Highmount** is an independent wealth management firm focused on the financial needs of high-net-worth individuals and families. With global investment and trust expertise, the firm has extensive capabilities to address a full range of wealth issues that clients face
- **US Tax and Financial Services Group** was established more than 25 years ago and handles the cross-border individual, corporation and trust tax affairs for those subjected to the US, UK and international tax systems. They advise and prepare tax returns for a wide range of individual and corporate clients in over 32 countries.
- **Victorinox**, the well-known pocketknife manufacturer in Ibach-Schwyz, is sending out a clear message for practical environmental protection through its Green Shield program. For the program's launch, the entire workforce of 900 was shown Al Gore's film on climate change.
- **Presence Switzerland** is in charge of the practical implementation of communication abroad. Communication abroad contributes to safeguarding Switzerland's interests abroad using various public-relations tools.
- **Gerda Spillmann Swiss Cosmetics** - make up used by First Lady Michele Obama - develops, produces and distributes natural and highly effective face care and make-up products since 1944. They use solely plant-based raw materials and active ingredients (e.g. Swiss Edelweiss extracts from organic cultivation). Skin care products are free of parabens and mineral oils. No animal testing.
- **The Hess Collection** portfolio is comprised of Hess Collection Mount Veeder Estate wines, Hess Napa Valley wines and Hess Select wines. All our estate vineyards are sustainably farmed in accordance with our founder, Donald Hess' philosophy: "nurture the land, return what you take."

Other conference sponsors include Clements Worldwide (International Insurance for Expats), Crown Relocations, Swatch, Traser Watch, Loeb Department Store, International Herald Tribune, Bern Tourism and ABC Art and Greeting Cards.

Founded in 1931, FAWCO is a global network of independent volunteer clubs and associations. There are more than 75 member clubs in 40 countries, with a total membership in excess of 15,000. FAWCO serves as a resource and channel of information for its members, promotes the rights of U.S. citizens living overseas and contributes to the global community through philanthropy and global issues task forces. A not-for-profit New York-based corporation, we are also a UN-accredited NGO with Special Consultative Status to the UN Economic and Social Council. The philanthropic arm of FAWCO - The FAWCO Foundation - is an independent entity, which has donated more than \$1,000,000 in education awards and development grants since its inception in 1967.

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