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Lifestyle

By Gail Scott

The Washington Diplomat

Iceland Pushes for Security Council Membership

During a reception for the Women's Foreign Policy Group on Oct. 19 hosted by Icelandic Ambassador Albert Jónsson at his Kalorama Residence, Icelandic Minister of Foreign Affairs Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir, a former mayor of Iceland's capital city of Reykjavik, explained why her tiny country's bid for a seat on the U.N. Security Council should be seriously considered.

"We are a small but very dynamic, independent country which has grown from one of the poorest nations into one of the most prosperous," she said.

In fact, at a time when everyone is worried about climate change, Iceland is a leading expert in sustainable living. With expertise in geo-thermal (GT) power (they have the largest GT plant in the world), the country is able to heat 90 percent of its homes naturally. Iceland is also well known for its highly successful sustainable harvesting of the sea. "Thirty-nine other countries could have all their energy from GT," Gísladóttir said.



"As a small nation, we could better represent all the other small nations in the world," she explained. And, with Iceland being "a leader in the emancipation of women," this energetic foreign minister also suggested that Iceland would be "the perfect choice" for including women's viewpoints in Security Council decisions.

"Nowhere are there more women in the labor market than in Iceland. Seventy percent of Iceland's mothers are working mothers. In Iceland, women's empowerment is the key to our success," Gísladóttir said. "We deserve a seat at the table [of the U.N. Security Council]," she vowed. "And women need to be part of the peacekeeping process."

From left, Ambassador of Monaco Gilles Alexandre Noghes and his wife Ellen talk with Icelandic Minister of Foreign Affairs Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir at a discussion held at the ambassador's residence on why Iceland should receive a seat at the U.N. Security Council hosted by the Women's Foreign Policy Group.

Front page: Icelandic Minister of Foreign Affairs Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir, left, and Icelandic Ambassador Albert Jónsson attend the discussion hosted by the Women's Foreign Policy Group.

Photos: Gail Scott