

Talking points
Opening Remarks for Ms. Puri
Expert Group Meeting on the themes for the 2015 and 2016 ECOSOC cycles
UN Women Headquarters, New York
4-5 December 2014

- On behalf of the UN-Women Executive Director and Under-Secretary-General, Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, welcome to all distinguished delegates; partners; fellow panelists; colleagues and friends, to this important expert group workshop.
- It is indeed a great honour for UN-Women to serve as host for your important deliberations. Thanks to the Director, Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination, Mr. Navid Hanif and entire team for organizing this two-day consultation and share these opening remarks.
- This forum comes at a critical juncture for the international community as we transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the implementation of a universal sustainable development agenda.
- UN Women is committed to working together with the entire ECOSOC system in responding effectively to the high expectations of the new development framework, in order to deliver transformative change.
- As we deliberate, looking ahead, exploring possible challenges and considering policymaking approaches, we need to remember that to be transformative, the post-2015 development agenda must be universal. This means it applies to all people, wherever they are located: women and men, boys and girls, and particularly the most vulnerable and disadvantaged among us.
- In 1997, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) agreed conclusions defined gender mainstreaming as the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It was agreed therefore, that gender mainstreaming is required to integrate women's specific concerns and experiences into all policies and programmes in all sectors so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.
- We moved even further at Rio+20, where Member States unequivocally declared the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment for sustainable development – and this year, at the fifty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, where the Agreed Conclusions called for gender equality and

women's empowerment to be included as a stand-alone goal, and to be integrated — through targets and indicators — into all other goals in the post-2015 development agenda.

- As our Executive Director stated in her remarks at the Stocktaking Event on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, at the UN Headquarters, in early September: “The new agenda must challenge the status quo and change the structures that perpetuate inequality, poverty, vulnerability and environmental degradation. We must ensure that the systems and root causes that are sustaining gender inequality are addressed adequately, with proportional intensity and determination.”
- We are challenged to be innovative, to think outside of the box, to move from commitments to real sustainable results.
- I look forward within these two days to engaging and fruitful discussions as we seek to collectively embark on the way forward.