

COMMONWEALTH

WOMEN'S FORUM

InterContinental Hotel, St. Julians, Malta
22 - 24 November 2015



01.

Welcome



Her Excellency
Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca
President of Malta

It is indeed an honour for Malta to be hosting the first Women's Forum as part of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting. Convening a Women's Forum shows the Commonwealth's commitment to giving recognition to the role of women in society today, and should highlight the opportunities for the often untapped potential of women to the socio-economic agenda and their competence as leaders. The empowerment of women is adamant to the development of an equal and just society throughout the world.

In view of this, the Women's Forum needs to also bring to the fore the suffering of women across the globe. Even today, women and girls are experiencing harsh realities in their everyday life; as girls are still being denied education, abduction from their families for sexual exploitation, made to suffer the horrific practice of Female Genital Mutilation, and be victims of violence and cruelty.

The time is ripe to move from rhetoric to action. May the Women's Forum move beyond discussions to entice the Heads of Government present to act to ensure the wellbeing of women and mark an end to the atrocities women and girls are experiencing today. The Commonwealth can effectively be an inspiration to the world in bringing about change in the lives of women and girls.

I augur successful and effective discussions at the Women's Forum, so that women and girls all over the Commonwealth may have the opportunity to reach their full potential.



02.

Women Ahead: Be All That You Can Be

The theme chosen for this inaugural Commonwealth Women's Forum is a clear message supporting the empowerment of women. Women have the potential to change their own economic status, as well as that of the communities and countries in which they live. Yet more often than not, women's economic contributions go unrecognised, and unequal opportunities between women and

men continue to hamper women's ability to empower themselves and improve their lives. In societies where equality for all is not just a notion but a tangible reality, communities are enriched by the diversity of contributions which transcend gender, in all aspects of life. This is the future we envisage for the one billion women who live in the Commonwealth.

03.

Overview

Women's economic empowerment is increasingly viewed as the most important contributing factor to achieving equality between women and men. Economically strengthening women – who are half the world's workforce – is not only a means by which to spur economic growth, but also a matter of advancing women's human rights.

This year Malta will host the first ever Commonwealth Women's Forum. The intention is for the Commonwealth Women's Forum to become a permanent feature in CHOGM programmes and be the

focal point for discussions on women's contributions in societies within the Commonwealth and beyond. The Forum will provide a platform for women to discuss challenges they face, share best practice and agree on actions and recommendations to carry forward to the leaders of the Commonwealth.

It will be attended by government leaders, women leaders, civil society representatives and business leaders from across the Commonwealth.

Objectives of the 2015 Women's Forum:

- Place **women's social and economic** issues on the Commonwealth agenda.
- Bring together people from across the globe to share **stories of success**.
- Raise **awareness** about matters affecting **women's development** in order to tackle poverty and inequality.
- Create a **networking platform** for building new relationships and reinforcing existing ones.
- **Encourage younger generations** to secure fulfilment in their lives and those of others.

04. Programme

22nd November 2015 - INAUGURATION CEREMONY

19.30

Opening Remarks by

H.E. Kamalesh Sharma, *Commonwealth Secretary-General*

The Hon Joseph Muscat, *Prime Minister of Malta*

Address by

H.E. Marie Louise Coleiro Preca, *President of Malta*

23rd November 2015 - DAY ONE

09.00 - 9.30

Official Opening

Welcome by

Ms Phyllis Muscat, *Head, CHOGM 2015 Taskforce*,

Ms Amelia Kinahoi-Siamomua, *Head of Gender, Commonwealth Secretariat*

Dr Claire Cassar, *Chair, Women's Forum Subcommittee*

09.30 - 10.00

Main Address

Dr Lakshmi Puri

Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and Deputy Executive Director of UN Women, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

10.00 - 11.30

FIRST PANEL SESSION - WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP

Lead Speaker - The Hon Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, *Speaker of Parliament, Bangladesh*

Moderator - Prof Tagaloatele Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop, *Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand*

Panel Topics and Speakers

✳ **Women's Political Leadership - Dr Josephine Ahikire**, *Assistant Professor, Makerere University, Uganda*
Ms Joanna Maycock, *Secretary General, European Women's Lobby*

✳ **Women's Corporate Leadership - Dr Shaheena Janjuha-Jivraj**, *Co-founder BoardWalk and Senior Lecturer, Henley Business School*

✳ **Women in the Judiciary - Dr Karen Brewer**, *General Secretary, CMJA*

Question and Answer Session

11.30 - 12.00

Tea/Coffee Break

12.00 - 13.30

SECOND PANEL SESSION - WOMEN, MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

Lead Speaker - Ms Jackie Leonard, *Presenter, The Newsroom, BBC World Service*

Moderator - Dr Carmen Sammut, *Head of Department, International Relations, University of Malta*

Panel Topics and Speakers

✳ **Women, Media and Communication - Ms Baria Alamuddin**, *Foreign Editor, Al Hayat*
Dr Brenda Murphy, *Senior Lecturer, Gender Studies, University of Malta*

✳ **Women's Technology and Innovation - Dr Bola Olabisi**, *CEO, Global Women Inventors & Innovators Network*

Ms Doreen Bogdan-Martin, *Chief Strategic Planning, International Telecommunication Union*

Ms Elvia George, *Chief Finance Officer, Bank of Valletta*

Question and Answer Session

13.30 - 13.40

Ms Kim Simples Barrow - *Women's Global Fund*

13.40 - 15.00

Lunch Break

15.00 - 15.20	<p>Ms Lesley Rudd, <i>Infant Trust</i> & Ms Nicole Mamadi, <i>Kids R Special</i> <i>Two women, living very different lives in the UK & South Africa, describe how they came to work together on a cross- Commonwealth basis to protect children from abuse.</i></p>
15.20 - 16.50	<p>THIRD PANEL SESSION - WOMEN IN SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT</p> <p>Lead Speaker - Ms Khadija Gbla, <i>Anti-FGM Campaigner</i></p> <p>Moderator - Dr Marceline Naudi <i>Head of Department, Gender Studies, University of Malta</i></p> <p>Panel Topics and Speakers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Women and Education - Dr Winsome Gordon, <i>CEO, Jamaica Teaching Council</i> Ms Jude Kelly, <i>Women of the World Festival</i> * Women and Health - Prof Robinson Mbu, <i>Ministry of Public Health, Cameroon</i> Dr Felicity Daly, <i>Executive Director, Kaleidoscope Trust</i> * Women in Social Enterprise - Ms Christine Wilson, <i>Head of Research & Engagemen, Society, British Council</i> Dr Lena Wilson, <i>Chief Executive, Scottish Enterprise</i> <p>Question and Answer Session</p>
19.00	<p>Gala Dinner & Awards Ceremony <i>Fort St. Elmo, Valletta</i></p>

DAY TWO – 24th November 2015

8.10 - 08.30	<p>Plenary Session <i>Opening Speech by</i> Ms Michelle Muscat, <i>Spouse of the Prime Minister of Malta</i> H.E. Natasha Stott Despoja AM, <i>Ambassador for Women and Girls, Australia</i></p>
8.10 - 08.30	<p><i>Group Photo</i></p>
<p><i>Parallel Group Workshops focusing on Thematic Programme Areas to take forward into the CHOGM Communique as mandates for the Commonwealth (Participants will be given the option to select a workshop in which to participate).</i></p>	
9.00 - 13.00	<p>PARALLEL WORKSHOPS <i>(Coffee break will be served at 10.30).</i></p> <p>Group 1</p> <p>Women's Political Empowerment - (CPA-UK, CLGF, GS-ComSec) Moderator - The Hon Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury, <i>Speaker of Parliament, Bangladesh</i></p> <p>Ms Fiona Mactaggart, <i>Member of Parliament, UK</i> Ms Reneé Laiviera, <i>Commissioner & Acting Exec. Director, National Commission for the Promotion of Equality Malta</i> Ms Alison Zerafa, <i>Mayor of Cospicua, Malta</i> Prof Tagaloatele Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop, <i>Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand</i></p> <p>Group 2</p> <p>Child/Early and Forced Marriage - (HRUnit-CS)</p> <p>Dr Josephine Ojiambo, <i>Deputy Secretary General (Political), Commonwealth Secretariat</i> Dr Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda, <i>African Union Goodwill Ambassador for Ending Child Marriage</i> Dr Hina Jilani, <i>Member of the Elders Group formed by Nelson Mandela</i> The Hon Prof Nkandu Lou, <i>Minister of Gender & Child Development, Zambia</i> Dr Karen McKenzie, <i>Head of Human Rights, Commonwealth Secretariat</i></p>

Group 3	<p>Women and Enterprise Development - (GS-ComSec) Moderator – Dr JosAnn Cutajar, <i>Senior Lecturer, Gender Studies, University of Malta</i></p> <p>Ms Candace Johnson, <i>Founder, Global Board Ready Women, France</i> Ms Deborah Leary OBE, <i>CEO, Forensic Pathways, UK</i> Dr Medha Purao Samant, <i>Chairperson, Annapurna Pariwar, India</i> Ms Alison Hill, <i>Chief Executive Officer, The Argus Group, Bermuda</i> Dr Margo Thomas, <i>International Investment Consultant, USA</i> Ms Freda Miriklis, <i>Co-Chair, Commonwealth Business Women Network, Australia</i></p>
Group 4	<p>Gender and Youth Leadership – (RCS and Youth Affairs Division, CS)</p> <p>Ms Katherine Ellis, <i>Director, Youth Affairs Division, Commonwealth Secretariat</i> Ms Kim Simplis Barrow, <i>Belize Special Envoy for Children and Women</i> Ms Sarah Soysa, <i>Coordinator, Commonwealth Youth Gender & Equality Network</i> Ms Vivian Adhiambo, <i>Youth Leader, UN Women</i> Mr Jacob Thomas, <i>Member, Commonwealth Youth Gender & Equality Network</i> Mr Jude Thaddeus Njikem, <i>President, Organisation of African Youth, Cameroon</i></p>
Group 5	<p>Gender and Education – (ACU and COL) Moderator – Mr George Borg, <i>DG, Directorate Educational Services, Malta</i></p> <p>Prof Asha Kanwar, <i>President & CEO of COL, Canada</i> Mr Kodhandaraman Balasubramanian, <i>COL Education Specialist, Canada</i> Ms Dorothy Gordon, <i>DG, Ghana-India Kofi Annan Centre of Excellence in ICT</i> Prof Louise Morley, <i>Professor of Education, University of Sussex, UK</i> Prof Maithree Wickramasinghe, <i>Senior Lecturer, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka</i> Dr John Kirkland, <i>ACU Deputy Secretary General, UK</i></p>
13.00 – 14.30	Lunch
14.30 – 16.00	<p>Plenary Session Moderator – Dr Marceline Naudi, <i>Head of Department, Gender Studies, University of Malta</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Report Back from Groups * Drafting Committee Meeting finalise Women’s Forum Outcome Document
16.00 – 16.15	Tea/Coffee Break
16.15 – 17.00	<p>Plenary Session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Presentation Women’s Forum Outcome to Participants * Discussions
17.00 - 18.00	<p>Closing Ceremony The Hon Helena Dalli, <i>Minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs & Civil Liberties, Malta</i></p>

This programme is subject to change



Contributing Partners

ACU – Association of Commonwealth Universities

CAPAM – CW Association of Public Administration and Management

CBWN – Commonwealth Business Women’s Network

CLGF – Commonwealth Local Government Forum

CEIC – Commonwealth Enterprise and Institute Council

CMJA – Commonwealth Magistrate and Judges Association

CF – Commonwealth Foundation

COL – Commonwealth of Learning

CPA-UK – Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, United Kingdom

CS/ComSec – Commonwealth Secretariat, London

GS – Gender Section

HEU – Health and Education Unit, Commonwealth Secretariat

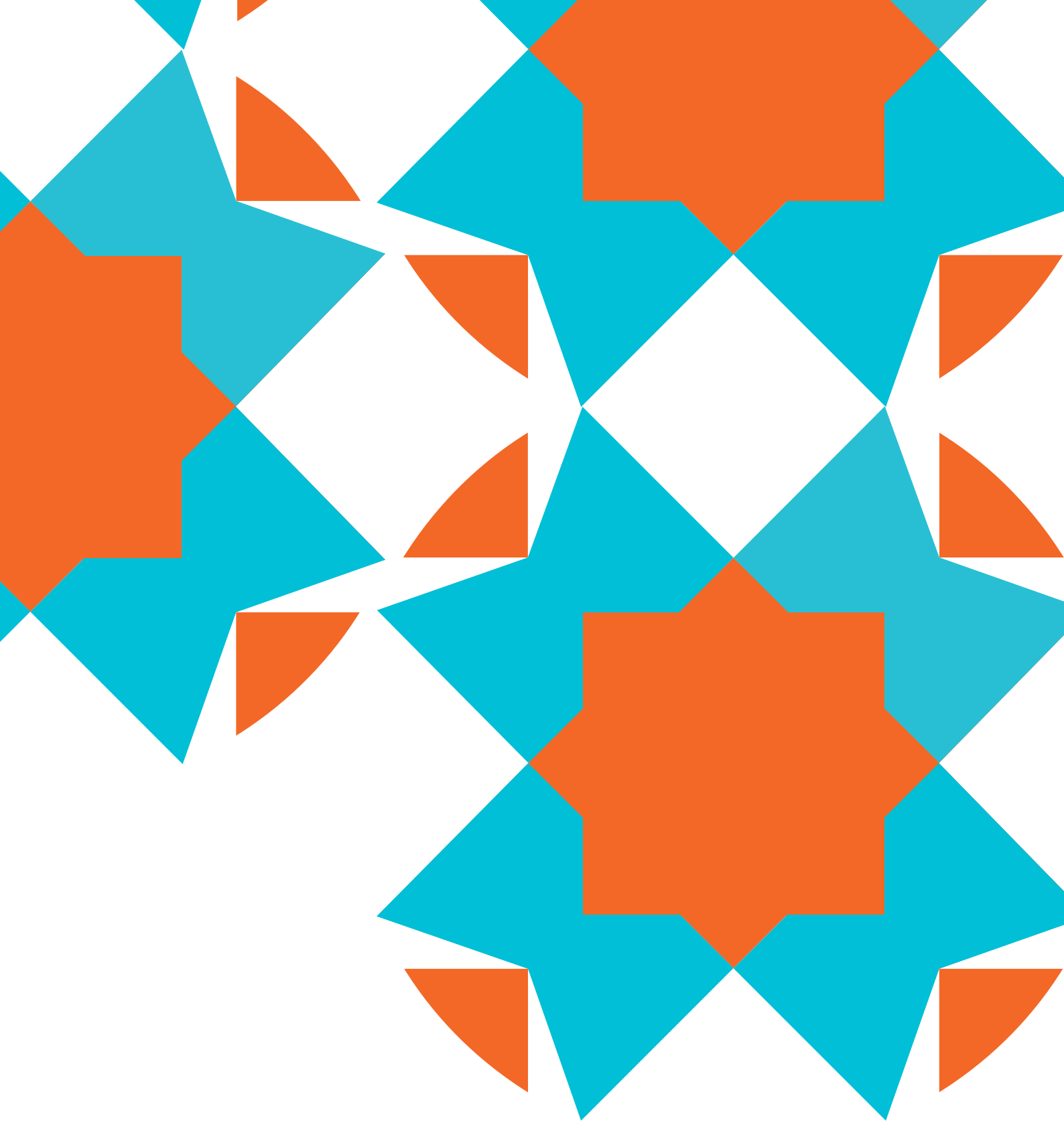
HRU – Human Rights Unit, Commonwealth Secretariat

RCS – Royal Commonwealth Society

Public Alliance – Commonwealth Public Broadcasters

World Bank

YD – Youth Division, Commonwealth Secretariat



CHOGM
Malta 2015



Women's
Forum



The Commonwealth



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