Interactive dialogue on the focus area

**Women and girls of African descent**

Thursday, 14 March 2019, 3.00pm – 6.00pm, CR1, United Nations Headquarters

**BIOGRAPHIES OF SPEAKERS**

**Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka** is United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women since 2013. Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka has worked in government and civil society, and with the private sector, and was actively involved in the struggle to end apartheid in her home country of South Africa. She has devoted her career to issues of human rights, equality and social justice. From 2005 to 2008, she served as Deputy President of South Africa. Prior to this, she served as Minister of Minerals and Energy and Deputy Minister in the Department of Trade and Industry. She was a Member of Parliament as part of South Africa’s first democratic government. She began her career as a teacher and is the founder of the Umlambo Foundation, which supports leadership and education.

**Ms. Dominique Day** is an American attorney and member of the United Nations Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent. She has two decades of experience as a justice advocate in the United States and internationally. Ms. Day has worked with governments, universities, and NGOs as a subject matter expert on legal aid, access to justice, building effective legal institutions, human rights advocacy, and rule of law. Ms. Day has advised non-profit start-up ventures, conducted research including a nationwide analysis of legal aid in Afghanistan and research on child sexual abuse, and capacity-building on a range of social justice issues globally. She guest lectures on issues of human rights, civil rights, race, sexual orientation and gender identity, women’s access and equality, and rule of law and access to justice.

**Ms. Valdecir Nascimento** is the Executive Coordinator of ODARA – *Instituto da Mulher Negra* (Black Women’s Institute) and has a Master Degree in Education from the State University of Bahia. She also coordinates the *Rede de Mulheres Negras do Nordeste do Brasil* (Black Women’s Network for the Northeast of Brazil) and is a member of the Nacional Council for the Promotion of Racial Equality. Ms. Nascimento has served as a consultant to UNDP, UNESCO and UNICEF and is a member of the Committee of Black Women Towards a 50-50 Planet in 2030 established by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) office in Brazil.
Ms. Caren Paola Yanez is a Civil Engineer, graduate in International Mechanisms for the Defense of the Rights of Indigenous and Afro-descendant Women in Bolivia. Ms. Yanez is an Afro-Bolivian activist, and currently General Coordinator of the Afro-Latin American Afro-Caribbean and Diaspora Women's Network. Ms. Yanez is also Member of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) Civil Society Advisory Group for the Latin American and Caribbean region, as well as facilitator on issues of gender, identity, discrimination, racial discrimination, women's rights, and rights of Afro-descendant populations and indigenous peoples.

Mr. Sami Nevala is the focal point for survey research at the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, based in Vienna, Austria. As the head of sector for statistics and surveys, he has overseen the collection of reliable and comparable data on a variety of fundamental rights issues, including EU-wide research on the rights of immigrants and ethnic minorities and the agency’s large-scale survey on violence against women. He has specialised in victimisation surveys and crime statistics through working for the European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control – HEUNI – and his consultancy work for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) and the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

Ms. Eunice Musiime is the current Executive Director of Akina Mama wa Afrika (AMwA); a lawyer, feminist, and development specialist with considerable experience in advancing social justice at national, regional and international level. Ms. Musiime has a commendable track record on Feminist and Transformational Leadership Development, Strategic Planning, Research, Advocacy and Movement Building. She has also actively engaged in influencing the following critical policy processes including: Sustainable Development Goals; the Commission on the Status of Women, the Maputo Protocol on Women’s Rights, the Development Effectiveness Agenda and Financing for Development. Ms. Musiime possesses a bachelor’s degree in Law from University of Dar es Salaam (Tanzania) and a Masters in Business Administration majoring in public policy analysis from the University of Birmingham (UK).