

UK Statement delivered by Grace Wood

1st informal of the General Assembly review of ECOSOC and HLPF

11 February 2026

Thank you,

We welcome hearing the appetite for this review in the room. As others have said, this review of ECOSOC and HLPF is much needed and timely, linked with wider UN80 reform and GA and Second Committee revitalization.

We value the central role of ECOSOC as coordinator and catalyst for global efforts to advance development and rights, as the only universal platform which convenes the full spectrum of actors across member states, the UN system, international financial institutions, and civil society. We value its role as a gateway for civil society to participate in UN deliberations, a driver of the UN development system overseeing 70% of the system's resources, and a convener of the humanitarian community.

And we value the important role of HLPF as the annual review point for the Sustainable Development Goals, and the key forum for follow up on the 2030 Agenda.

But with only 4 years to 2030, we need to make their work more streamlined and better focused on impact over process.

The UK has the following priorities for the review. We would like to see:

Firstly, stronger strategic direction. We would like to see the ECOSOC President and Bureau more empowered to set strategic direction, and drive decision-making on what is on the ECOSOC calendar versus the General Assembly and Committees, working with the PGA and Committee chairs. We need to clarify what we need to discuss, when, and through which forum, not just continue with a duplicative calendar. For example, we could discuss all next steps on FfD4 follow-up during the ECOSOC FFD Forum in Spring, rather than repeating this again at HLPF and Second Committee. We should also review when is the most apt time to discuss science and tech issues between the STI Forum and 2C.

Secondly, increased impact: ECOSOC and HLPF need to better demonstrate how they are helping drive positive impact from the top political level down to countries. For the 2026-2030 period, we need these mechanisms to focus more on countries with the highest development need, including prioritising support for and follow up on their VNRs, and providing additional support where needed. We could also replace debates and renegotiations with briefings/progress updates.

Thirdly, less burden and duplication. There is room to reduce the volume of debates, meetings, events and resolutions, to shift from a focus on process, to a focus on follow up to and implementation of commitments already made. For example: shorten HLPF

by reducing duplication of the ECOSOC and HLPF High Level Segments; consider biennialising/triennialising some ECOSOC meetings; placing a limit on side events so we focus on discussions in main meetings; and removing issues like double adoptions.

We need to and have the opportunity to embed and implement UN80 mandates work and GA revitalization decisions through this review.

You can count on the UK's full engagement in this review of ECOSOC and HLPF, and we will follow up with written comments as well.