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Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Affairs Committee (Third Committee) Agenda item 28: Advancement of Women

Report of the Secretary-General

Mr. Chairman,

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to address the Third Committee on Agenda Item 28: Advancement of Women.

I take this opportunity to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, and the members of the Bureau on your election and wish yOlJ a successful session. I would also like to congratulate Michelle Bachelet on her appointment as the Executive Director of UN Women and express the full support of UNFPA to advance women's empowerment, gender equality and accountability to the world's girls and women.

It is in this spirit that two years ago, the Third Committee, and subsequently the General Assembly adopted the first resolution (A/RES/63/158) on "Supporting efforts to end obstetric fistula". The resolution was co-sponsored by 138 member States and requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on its implementation. Today it is my honour to present the Report of the Secretary-General on "Supporting efforts to end obstetric fistula", contained iRSt6.9172 520.0174 Tc re21 Secre2 Tc 2.1"032i

The Report states that, over the past two years, considerable progress has been achieved in focusing attention on maternal health and in addressing obstetric fistula. This progress is mainly due to better evidence of effective interventions, enhanced data collection and analysis, advocacy programmes, partnerships, and stronger political and financial commitments.

The power of working in partnership is demonstrated in many effective health initiatives, such as the inter-agency group H4+, consisting of UNICEF, UNFPA, UNAIDS, the World Health Organization and The World Bank. The H4+ is working with governments to promote maternal, newborr'1 and child health, and has played an important role in supporting the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health.

In 2003, UNFPA and partners launched the world's first global Campaign to End fistula. The Campaign has raised awareness and is producing measurable results because it brings together key actors in a well-coordinated parlnership to supporl national efforts. The mid-term review of