In 2014, UN efforts to advance the status of women worldwide continued to be guided by the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted at the Fourth (1995) World Conference on Women, and the outcome of the General Assembly’s twenty-third (2000) special session (Beijing+5), which reviewed progress in their implementation.

During the year, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) spearheaded political and social mobilization to accelerate implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in marking the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women in 2015. A record number of 164 reviews by as many Governments undertook national stock-taking of their implementation of those gender equality targets. The year also brought the international community to a crucial confluence of efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by the target date of 2015 and to deliberate on a successor road map for sustainable development.

The fifty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women had as its priority theme “Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls”. At the session, Member States for the first time assessed progress for women and girls on all eight MDGs and identified factors constraining achievement. As a result, the Commission endorsed a stand-alone gender equality goal in the post-2015 agenda and the integration of gender equality across the agenda.

The Commission recommended to the Economic and Social Council a draft resolution on mainstreaming a gender perspective in the United Nations system. Further, the agreed conclusions on the priority theme adopted by the Commission at its annual session were transmitted as input into the 2014 high-level segment of the Council. The conclusions called for action in five areas: realizing women’s and girls’ full enjoyment of all human rights; strengthening the enabling environment for gender equality and the empowerment of women; maximizing investments in gender equality and the empowerment of women; strengthening the evidence-base for gender equality and the empowerment of women; and ensuring women’s participation and leadership at all levels and strengthening accountability.

Issues central to women’s lives on which the General Assembly adopted resolutions included the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and the full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the Assembly’s twenty-third special session; the World Survey on the Role of Women in Development; intensification of efforts to end obstetric fistula; female genital mutilations; all forms of violence against women and girls; and trafficking in women and girls.

The Security Council held two debates on women and peace and security, with statements made by the Secretary-General, the Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, and the UN-Women Executive Director. A Council presidential statement in October addressed the particular needs of displaced women, highlighted the impact of violent extremism on women and welcomed the Secretary-General’s commissioning of a global study.

Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference and Beijing+5

During 2014, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly considered follow-up to the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, particularly the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action [YUN 1995, p. 1170] and further actions and initiatives to implement both instruments adopted five years later at the twenty-third (2000) special session of the Assembly (Beijing+5) by resolution S/23-2 [YUN 2000, p. 1084]. The Declaration had reaffirmed the commitment of Governments to the goals and objectives of the Fourth World Conference and to the implementation of 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the Platform for Action: women and poverty; education and training of women; women and health; violence against women; women and armed conflict; women and the economy; women in power and decision-making; institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women; human rights of women; women and the media; women and the environment; and the girl child. The issue of mainstreaming a gender perspective into UN policies and programmes continued to be addressed (see p. 1290).

Reports of Secretary-General. In response to General Assembly resolution 68/140 [YUN 2013, p. 1088],
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the Secretary-General, in a July report [A/69/182], reviewed the follow-up to and implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the Assembly’s twenty-third special session. He focused on the extent to which gender perspectives were reflected in selected UN intergovernmental processes and provided quantitative and qualitative analyses on the subject. The report assessed separately the work of the Commission on the Status of Women, noting that as a consensus-building and policymaking body, it continued to lead at the global level on issues of gender equality and women’s empowerment. The Commission also had primary responsibility for the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women, a role which took on additional importance as the target date for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) approached; as Member States elaborated the post-2015 development agenda and sustainable development goals (SDGs); and as stakeholders intensified their activities towards commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, for which the Commission would undertake, in March 2015, a comprehensive review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The report also described the role played by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) in integrating a gender perspective into the post-2015 development agenda, and in defining a set of SDGs, particularly by intensifying the contribution of UN-Women to the work of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (see p. 945).

The Secretary-General concluded that intergovernmental bodies were making progress in reflecting a gender perspective in their work, but such progress remained uneven. Resolutions of the General Assembly that included a gender perspective showed a solid upward trend, and those with a focus on gender equality increased significantly, but those adopted by the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions registered a downward trend. In some areas, a gender perspective was still too seldom reflected, such as in resolutions dealing with disarmament and related international security questions, political issues and decolonization, administrative and budgetary matters, international legal matters, crime prevention and criminal justice, and narcotic drugs.

Several important intergovernmental processes were under way, including those on the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda and the development of a new climate agreement, at a time when Member States were also conducting the 20-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. Those processes were closely related and would influence global and national policies on a range of issues for years to come. It was therefore critical that such intergovernmental processes addressed gender perspectives so that women as well as men could benefit from their outcomes, and that inequality and discrimination against women were not perpetuated.

The Secretary-General recommended, among other measures, that the General Assembly reaffirm the relevance of gender mainstreaming as a globally accepted strategy in all issues considered by its Main Committees and subsidiary bodies.

Also pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/140 [YUN 2013, p. 1088], the Secretary-General submitted an August report [A/69/346 & Corr.1] on the improvement of the status of women in the UN system. The report, which covered the period from December 2011 to December 2013, discussed progress made and obstacles encountered in efforts to achieve gender balance within the 35 funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the UN system. The representation of women in the Professional and higher categories in the UN system increased marginally during the reporting period from 40.9 to 41.8 per cent, but the inverse relationship between the level and the representation of women continued: P-1 (54.3 per cent), P-2 (57.9 per cent), P-3 (45.3 per cent), P-4 (40.5 per cent), P-5 (34.2 per cent), D-1 (32.4 per cent), D-2 (30.1 per cent) and ungraded (26.7 per cent). Nonetheless, the P-4 to D-2 levels reached historic highs in their representation of women in 2013. Most notable were the increases in the representation of women at the D-1 level with 2 percentage points and at the D-2 level with 3.2 percentage points. The P-3 level registered a negligible decrease and the two lowest Professional levels, P-1 and P-2, maintained parity. With respect to promotions, progress was needed at the senior levels (P-5 to D-2), where the proportion of women promoted remained nearly 15 percentage points away from the achievement of parity, despite gains. The challenge for the UN system, including the Secretariat, was to reverse the inverse relationship between seniority and the representation of women, which pointed to the need to target each level. In that respect, 50 per cent of the entities surveyed by UN-Women on impediments to achieving gender balance cited a “lack of special measures for appointments and promotions” among their top three choices. Recommendations to address such challenges included the need for more intensive sponsorship by senior leaders; more rigorous promulgation and implementation of existing policies, including special measures for women and flexible working arrangements; enhanced monitoring and accountability; and career development for female staff members, accompanied by targeted outreach. The Secretary-General also recommended the harmonization and unification of gender-related policies, as part of the development and implementation of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women [YUN 2012, p. 1082], led by UN-Women. The Action Plan was the first unified gender accountability framework of the UN system and established 15 performance indicators, three of which
pertained to the status of women and their equal representation in the UN system, to be achieved by 2017.

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION**

On 18 December [meeting 73], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) Committee [A/69/481], adopted resolution 69/151 without vote [agenda item 27 (b)].

**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly**

The General Assembly,

Recalling its previous resolutions on the question, including resolution 68/140 of 18 December 2013, and recalling also the section of resolution 64/289 of 2 July 2010 entitled “Strengthening the institutional arrangements for support of gender equality and the empowerment of women”,

Deeply convinced that the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”, are important contributions to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and must be translated into effective action by all States, the United Nations system and other organizations concerned,

Reaffirming the commitments to gender equality and the advancement of women made at the Millennium Summit, the 2005 World Summit, the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals, the special event of the General Assembly to follow up efforts made towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals and other major United Nations summits, conferences and special sessions, and reaffirming also that their full, effective and accelerated implementation is integral to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

Welcoming progress made towards achieving gender equality, but stressing that challenges and obstacles remain in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session,

Noting that 2015 marks the twentieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and welcoming the efforts of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) to commemorate the occasion,

Recognizing that the responsibility for the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session rests primarily at the national level and that strengthened efforts are necessary in this respect, and reiterating that enhanced international cooperation is essential for full, effective and accelerated implementation,

Welcoming the work of the Commission on the Status of Women in reviewing the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and taking note with appreciation of all its agreed conclusions, including the agreed conclusions on the challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls adopted by the Commission at its fifty-eighth session, and of the need to implement them,

Welcoming also the strengthening of the capacity of UN-Women and its experience in achieving its mandate,

Taking note of the activities carried out by the Fund for Gender Equality and the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women,

Recognizing that the participation and contribution of civil society, in particular women’s groups and organizations and other non-governmental organizations, are important to the successful implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, in particular in the lead-up to the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Platform for Action,

Reaffirming that gender mainstreaming is a globally accepted strategy for promoting the empowerment of women and achieving gender equality by transforming structures of inequality, which is relevant in all issues considered by its Main Committees and subsidiary bodies, including in resolutions dealing with issues beyond social, humanitarian, cultural, economic and financial matters,

Reaffirming also the commitment to actively promote the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres, as well as the commitment to strengthen the capabilities of the United Nations system in the area of gender equality,

Reaffirming further the commitments in regard to gender equality and the empowerment of women in the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development: outcome document of the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus,

Bearing in mind the challenges and obstacles to changing discriminatory attitudes and gender stereotypes, which perpetuate discrimination against women and girls and stereotypical roles of boys and girls, men and women, and stressing that challenges and obstacles remain in the implementation of international standards and norms to address inequality between men and women,

Reaffirming the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS: Intensifying Our Efforts to Eliminate HIV and AIDS, adopted at the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on AIDS, held on 10 June 2011, in which, inter alia, the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women were recognized as fundamental for reducing the vulnerability of women to HIV and AIDS,

Welcoming the integration of a gender perspective into the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled “The future we want”, and in this regard commending UN-Women for its efforts to ensure coherence throughout the United Nations system in its advocacy for gender equality and the empowerment of women in the context of sustainable development, and in particular in the context of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals,

Noting with appreciation the attention to gender equality and the empowerment of women reflected in the outcome document of the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, entitled “sIsDs Accelerated Mo-
dalisies of Action (samoan Pathway"), and encouraging its appropriate follow-up and implementation,

Expressing serious concern that the urgent goal of 50/50 gender balance in the United Nations system, especially at senior and policymaking levels, with full respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in conformity with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, remains unmet, and that the representation of women in the United Nations system has remained almost static, with negligible improvement in some parts of the system, as reflected in the report of the Secretary-General on improvement in the status of women in the United Nations system,

Reaffirming the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding, and stressing the need for their participation therein, including at decision-making levels,


1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General on the measures taken and progress achieved in follow-up to and implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly;

2. Reaffirms the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and the declaration adopted on the occasion of the 15-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, and also reaffirms its commitment to their full, effective and accelerated implementation;

3. Also reaffirms the primary and essential role of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, as well as the catalytic role of the Commission on the Status of Women, in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women based on the full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session and in promoting and monitoring gender mainstreaming within the United Nations system;

4. Recognizes that the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the fulfillment of the obligations of States parties under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women are mutually reinforcing in respect of achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women, welcomes in this regard the contributions of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to promoting the implementation of the Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, and invites States parties to the Convention to include information on measures taken to enhance implementation at the national level in their reports to the Committee under article 18 of the Convention;

5. Calls upon States parties to comply fully with their obligations under the Convention and the Optional Protocol thereto and to take into consideration the concluding observations as well as the general recommendations of the Committee, urges States parties to consider limiting the extent of any reservations that they lodge to the Convention, to formulate any reservations as precisely and narrowly as possible and to regularly review such reservations with a view to withdrawing them so as to ensure that no reservation is incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention, also urges all Member States that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Convention to consider doing so, and calls upon those Member States that have not yet done so to consider signing and ratifying or acceding to the Optional Protocol;

6. Reiterates the importance and value of the mandate of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), and welcomes the Entity’s leadership in providing a strong voice for women and girls at all levels;

7. Reaffirms the important role of UN-Women in leading, coordinating and promoting accountability of the United Nations system in its work on gender equality and the empowerment of women;

8. Notes with appreciation the important and extensive work of UN-Women for more effective and coherent gender mainstreaming across the United Nations system, and calls upon UN-Women to continue to support gender mainstreaming across the United Nations system as an integral part of its work and of its efforts to accelerate action across the United Nations system;

9. Welcomes the commitment of UN-Women to support Member States in their efforts to develop and strengthen norms, policies and standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women as well as to integrate gender perspectives into sectoral policy and normative frameworks, and encourages the Entity to continue to promote the need to mainstream and strengthen gender perspective in the work of intergovernmental bodies and processes and the opportunities therein, and to provide technical assistance, at the request of Member States, in strengthening a gender perspective in resolutions and other outcomes;

10. Urges Member States to increase funding for the budget of UN-Women by providing, when legislative and budgetary provisions allow, core, multi-year, predictable, stable and sustainable voluntary contributions, recognizing the importance of adequate funding in enabling UN-Women to implement its strategic plan promptly and effectively and that the mobilization of financial resources for achieving its goals still remains a challenge;

11. Encourages all actors, including Governments, the United Nations system, other international organizations and civil society, to continue to support the work of the Commission on the Status of Women in fulfilling its central role in the follow-up to and review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session and, as applicable, to carry out the recommendations of the Commission, welcomes in this regard the Commission’s continued sharing of experiences, lessons learned and good practices in overcoming challenges to the full implementation at the national and international levels and the evaluation of progress in the implementation of priority themes, and encourages the intergovernmental bodies of the United Nations system, as appropriate, to incorporate the outcomes of the Commission into their work;

12. Calls upon Governments and the organs and the relevant funds and programmes and the specialized agencies
of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates, other international and regional organizations, including financial institutions, and all relevant actors of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, to intensify and accelerate action to achieve the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, nearly 20 years after their adoption, and of the outcome of the twenty-third special session;

13. Reaffirms that States have an obligation to exercise due diligence to prevent and combat all forms of violence against women and girls, provide protection to the victims and investigate, prosecute and punish the perpetrators of violence against women and girls, and that failure to do so violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms, calls upon Governments to elaborate and implement laws and strategies to eliminate violence against women and girls, encourages and supports men and boys to take an active part in the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence, encourages increased understanding among men and boys of how violence harms girls, boys, women and men and undermines gender equality, encourages all actors to speak out against any form of violence against women, and in this regard encourages Member States to continue to support the Secretary-General’s ongoing campaign “UNITE End Violence against Women” and the social mobilization and advocacy platform of UN-Women “Say NO—UNITE to End Violence against Women”;

14. Reiterates its call upon the United Nations system, including the main organs, their main committees and subsidiary bodies, through forums such as the high-level political forum on sustainable development and functions such as the annual ministerial review and the Development Cooperation Forum of the Economic and Social Council and the funds and programmes and the specialized agencies, to increase efforts to fully mainstream a gender perspective into all issues under their consideration and within their mandates, as well as into all United Nations summits, conferences and special sessions and their follow-up processes, including those of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in 2012;

15. Calls upon States to ensure that intergovernmental processes, such as the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, the third International Conference on Financing for Development and the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), consistently address gender perspectives in their preparatory processes and outcomes, and also calls upon States to ensure the reflection of a gender perspective in the discussions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change as they elaborate a new climate change agreement, to be adopted in 2015;

16. Reiterates that the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session is essential to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

17. Recalls its resolution 68/309 of 10 September 2014, in which it welcomed the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals and decided that the proposal of the Open Working Group contained in the report shall be the main basis for integrating sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda, while recognizing that other inputs will also be considered, in the intergovernmental negotiation process at the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly;

18. Urges States to build on the lessons learned from the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals as the new post-2015 development agenda is being shaped, also urges States to tackle critical remaining challenges through a transformative and comprehensive approach, and calls for gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights of women and girls to be reflected as a stand-alone goal and to be integrated through targets and indicators into all goals of any new development framework;

19. Requests the entities of the United Nations system to systematically incorporate the outcomes of the Commission on the Status of Women into their work, within their mandates, and, inter alia, to ensure effective support for the efforts of Member States towards the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and in this regard encourages UN-Women to continue to use concrete results-based reporting mechanisms and to ensure coherence, consistency and coordination between the normative and operational aspects of its work;

20. Strongly encourages Governments to continue to support the role and contribution of civil society, in particular non-governmental organizations and women’s organizations, in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session;

21. Calls upon Governments and the United Nations system to encourage women’s groups and other non-governmental organizations specializing in gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and in this regard encourages UN-Women to continue to use concrete results-based reporting mechanisms and to ensure coherence, consistency and coordination between the normative and operational aspects of its work;

22. Calls upon the intergovernmental bodies of the United Nations system to systematically request the inclusion of a gender perspective in reports of the Secretary-General and other inputs to intergovernmental processes;

23. Requests that reports of the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and their subsidiary bodies systematically address gender perspectives through gender-sensitive analysis and the provision of data disaggregated by sex and age and that conclusions and recommendations for further action address the different situations and needs of women and men and girls and boys in order to facilitate gender-sensitive policy development, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to convey the importance of reflecting a gender perspective to all stakeholders who provide input to his reports;

24. Encourages Member States, with the support of, as appropriate, United Nations entities, including UN-Women, international and regional organizations and other relevant actors, to prioritize the strengthening of national data collection and monitoring capacities with regard to statistics disaggregated by sex and age, as well as national tracking indicators for gender equality and the empowerment of women through multisectoral efforts and partnerships;

25. Calls upon all parts of the United Nations system to continue to play an active role in ensuring the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing
Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session through, inter alia, the maintenance of gender specialists in all entities of the United Nations system, as well as by ensuring that all personnel, especially those in the field, receive training and appropriate follow-up, including tools, guidance and support, for accelerated gender mainstreaming, and reaffirms the need to strengthen the capabilities of the United Nations system in the area of gender;

26. Requests the Secretary-General to review and double his efforts to make progress towards achieving the goal of 50/50 gender balance at all levels throughout the United Nations system, with full respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in conformity with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, considering, in particular, women from the developing and the least developed countries, countries with economies in transition and unrepresented or largely underrepresented Member States, and to ensure the implementation of measures, including temporary special measures, to accelerate progress, and managerial and departmental accountability with respect to gender balance targets, and strongly encourages Member States to identify and regularly submit more women candidates for appointment to positions in the United Nations system, especially at more senior and policymaking levels, including in peacekeeping operations;

27. Calls upon the United Nations system to continue its efforts towards achieving the goal of gender balance, including with the active support of gender focal points, and requests the Secretary-General to provide an oral report to the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-ninth session and to report to the General Assembly at its seventy-first session on the improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system, under the item entitled “Advancement of women”, and on progress made and obstacles encountered in achieving gender balance, with recommendations for accelerating progress and up-to-date statistics to be provided annually by entities of the United Nations, including on the number and percentage of women and their functions and nationalities throughout the United Nations system, as well as information on the responsibility and accountability of the offices of human resources management and the secretariat of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination for promoting gender balance;

28. Encourages increased efforts by Governments and the United Nations system to enhance accountability for the implementation of commitments to gender equality and the empowerment of women at the international, regional, national and local levels, including through improved monitoring and reporting on progress in relation to policies, strategies, resource allocations and programmes and by achieving gender balance;

29. Reaffirms that Governments bear the primary responsibility for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and that international cooperation has an essential role in assisting developing countries in progressing towards the full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;

30. Encourages its Main Committees and subsidiary bodies, as well as the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions, particularly in the light of the analysis contained in the report of the Secretary-General and of the cross-cutting nature of gender equality and the empowerment of women, to make further progress in the integration of a gender perspective into their work;

31. Encourages the Secretary-General to bring to the attention of the United Nations system the findings of his report in order to strengthen follow-up on these findings and accelerate the implementation of the present resolution;

32. Recalls Economic and Social Council resolution 2013/18 of 24 July 2013, in which the Council decided that, at its fifty-ninth session, in 2015, the Commission on the Status of Women would undertake a review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, including current challenges that affect the implementation of the Platform for Action and the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women, as well as opportunities for strengthening gender equality and the empowerment of women in the post-2015 development agenda through the integration of a gender perspective;

33. Urges all States and all other stakeholders, in that context, to undertake comprehensive reviews of the progress made and challenges encountered in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, with a view to strengthening and accelerating their full implementation, and to consider appropriate commemorative activities for the twentieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;

34. Encourages States and all stakeholders to strengthen the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into all sectors and in all areas of development, including through the national and regional preparations for the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;

35. Calls upon the United Nations system to continue to support and contribute to the review and appraisal process of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at the international, regional, national and local levels, encourages UN-Women to continue its efforts in support of the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the central role it is playing in mobilizing States, civil society, the United Nations system, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders at all levels, including through its activities, campaigns and special events for the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action aimed at strengthening political will and commitment, social mobilization, awareness-raising and revitalized public debates, a strengthened evidence base and knowledge generation, and encourages all stakeholders to ensure enhanced and sufficient resources to achieve gender equality, the empowerment of women and the realization of women’s full enjoyment of all human rights;

36. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to report annually to the General Assembly under the item entitled “Advancement of women”, and to the Commission on the Status of Women and the Economic and Social Council on the follow-up to and progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, with an assessment of progress in gender mainstreaming, including information on key achievements, lessons learned and good practices and recommendations on further measures to enhance and accelerate implementation.
**Critical areas of concern**

**Women and poverty**

**Women in development**

*Reports of Secretary-General.* The Secretary-General submitted a report [E/CN.6/2014/3] that gave an overview of challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for women and girls. The report provided recommendations for accelerating progress on the Goals, and for prioritizing gender equality and women's rights and empowerment in the post-2015 development agenda and sustainable development goals. The Secretary-General concluded that while there had been successes for women and girls in the case of some MDG targets, overall progress on gender equality and women's rights remained slow and uneven. The MDGs could not be achieved without harnessing the synergies between gender equality and all the Goals through systematic gender mainstreaming. The 20-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action provided an opportunity to align acceleration on the Goals with action on the full range of existing global norms and agreements on gender equality, thereby responding to gender inequality in all parts of the world. Lessons from the MDGs should inform the post-2015 development framework (see p. 960) and sustainable development goals, and gender equality and women's rights had to remain an explicit global priority. The development framework had to address the structural drivers of inequalities based on gender, age, income, location, race, ethnicity, sexuality and disability. The framework had to be grounded in international human rights obligations and in accordance with existing policy frameworks, with strong monitoring and accountability mechanisms for all development actors. The Secretary-General's recommendations for the Commission included actions on the creation of an enabling environment for gender equality and the rights of women and girls, a comprehensive approach to gender equality, and investment in gender statistics.

The Secretary-General also submitted a report [E/CN.6/2014/4] on progress in mainstreaming a gender perspective into the development, implementation and evaluation of national policies and programmes, with a focus on challenges and achievements in the implementation of the MDGs for women and girls. The report provided an overview of national approaches to the implementation of the MDGs for women and girls. It also presented a set of priorities for accelerating progress on the MDGs for women and girls, particularly in the areas of violence against women and girls, women's economic rights, universal social protection across the life cycle, women's sexual and reproductive health and rights, universally accessible and high-quality services and infrastructure (education, health, water and sanitation), gender equality and unpaid care work, gender equality and women's rights in sustainability policies, the voice and participation of women and girls at all levels in public and private institutions, an enabling environment for gender equality, and regular and high-quality data to permit the monitoring of gender equality and to inform policies.

The Secretary-General concluded that while some countries recognized the need for a comprehensive approach to gender equality in achieving the MDGs for women and girls, implementation at the national level was largely fragmented and narrowly approached. Gender mainstreaming across the framework remained weak, thus slowing progress on all the Goals. Important policy considerations had to be addressed, namely, the persistence of discriminatory laws, social norms and practices; the inequalities experienced by the most marginalized groups of women and girls; and adequate and sustained resources for gender equality. The Secretary-General's recommendations for the Commission included actions on the creation of an enabling environment for gender equality, investment in gender equality, a comprehensive policy approach to gender equality, investment in gender statistics, and monitoring and accountability for gender equality.

**Commission action.** In March [E/2014/27], the Commission on the Status of Women held parallel high-level round tables on the priority theme of its 2014 session, namely, “Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls”, as well as panel discussions on key policy initiatives. Participants had before them a Secretariat note [E.CN.6/2014/5] that contained the round-table discussion guide. On 21 March, the Commission adopted agreed conclusions on the priority theme and, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 68/1 [YUN 2013, p. 1413], decided to transmit them as input into the 2014 high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council.

**Communication.** On 6 May [E/2014/90], the Philippines, in its capacity as chair of the fifty-eighth session of the Commission, transmitted to the President of the Economic and Social Council, the Commission's agreed conclusions on its priority theme, “Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls”, adopted on 21 March.

**World Survey.** In response to General Assembly resolution 64/217 [YUN 2009, p. 1120], the Secretary-General, in July, submitted the seventh *World Survey on the Role of Women in Development* [A/69/156], a report presented to the Assembly at five-year intervals. The theme of the *Survey* was “Gender equality
and sustainable development” and the survey demonstrated why sustainable development policies and frameworks at the global, regional, national and local levels had to include an explicit commitment to gender equality and the realization of women’s and girls’ human rights and capabilities. Women’s collective action and full and equal participation in all aspects of decision-making related to policy development and monitoring also had to be supported.

States played a central role in delivering on commitments to gender equality, setting standards and regulations for resource use and providing public services and investments for sustainable development. Public investment was necessary for scaling-up key innovations for gender-responsive public goods, such as the provision of water supplies, appropriate sanitation facilities and modern energy services. Alliances between the state, private sector and civil society actors that advanced gender equality and sustainable development also had a vital role to play.

The Survey proposed three criteria to assess whether sustainable development was in line with gender equality and women’s human rights: compliance with human rights standards and the realization of women’s capabilities; attention to the unpaid care work of women and girls, especially those in poor and marginalized households and communities; and full and equal participation by women and girls in all aspects of sustainable development. It also noted that Member States should fully implement the commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women contained in the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women should implement their obligations thereunder. The Survey recommended policy actions to move towards an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable future, including in the areas of food security; investments that accelerated gender equality; data and statistics; financing; population measures related to sexual and reproductive health and rights; and the green economy and green growth.

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION**

On 19 December [meeting 75], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Second (Economic and Financial) Committee [A/69/472/Add.3], adopted resolution 69/236 without vote (agenda item 23 (d)).

**World Survey on the Role of Women in Development**


1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General, which focuses on gender equality and sustainable development, and decides to consider the report at its seventieth session, under the sub-item entitled “Women in development” of the item entitled “Eradication of poverty and other development issues”;

2. Requests the Secretary-General to update the World Survey on the Role of Women in Development for the consideration of the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session, noting that it should continue to focus on selected emerging development themes that have an impact on the role of women in the economy at the national, regional and international levels.

**Women and health**

**Elimination of obstetric fistula**

In response to General Assembly resolution 67/147 [YUN 2012, p. 1087], the Secretary-General submitted an August report [A/69/256] on supporting efforts to end obstetric fistula, a devastasting childbirth injury leaving women incontinent and therefore often stigmatized and isolated within their communities. The report noted a strong association between fistula and stillbirth, as research indicated that most women (from 78 to 95 per cent) who developed obstetric fistula also delivered a stillborn baby. Women with fistula might also experience neurological disorders, orthopaedic injury, bladder infections, painful sores, kidney failure, infertility and social isolation, which severely affected their mental health and made it difficult to secure income or support, thereby deepening their poverty. Precise figures were unavailable, but it was estimated that more than 2 million women and girls were living with obstetric fistula. To prevent its occurrence, it was necessary to address the root causes of maternal mortality and morbidity, which included poverty, gender inequality, barriers to education, especially for girls, and child marriage and adolescent pregnancy. The report identified three well-known, cost-effective interventions to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity, including obstetric fistula, which urgently needed to be scaled up to reduce the number of deaths and disabilities: universal access to family planning; a trained health professional with midwifery skills at childbirth; and timely access to high-quality emergency obstetric and neonatal care. Most cases of obstetric fistula could be treated through surgery, after which women could be reintegrated into their communities with appropriate psychosocial care, but research suggested there was a significant unmet need for fistula treatment. Few health-care facilities were able to provide high-quality fistula surgery, owing to a lack of health-care professionals with the
necessary skills, as well as essential equipment and life-saving medical supplies. When the services were available, many women were not aware of them or could not afford or access them because of barriers, such as transportation costs.

The report outlined efforts made by countries and the UN system to end obstetric fistula. It also offered recommendations to intensify those efforts, within a human rights-based approach, to end obstetric fistula in the days remaining for the achievement of MDG 5 and beyond, by improving maternal health, strengthening health systems, reducing health inequities and increasing the levels and predictability of funding.

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION**

On 18 December [meeting 73], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/69/481], adopted resolution 69/148 without vote [agenda item 27 (a)].

**Intensification of efforts to end obstetric fistula**

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 62/138 of 18 December 2007, 63/158 of 18 December 2008, 65/188 of 21 December 2010 and 67/147 of 20 December 2012 on supporting efforts to end obstetric fistula,

Reaffirming the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development, and their reviews, and the international commitments in the field of social development and to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls made at the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance and the 2005 World Summit, as well as those made in the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals, entitled “Keeping the promise: united to achieve the Millennium Development Goals”,

Reaffirming also the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and urging States that have not done so to consider, as a matter of priority, signing, ratifying or acceding to those Conventions and the Optional Protocols thereto,

Welcoming the report of the Secretary-General and the conclusions and recommendations contained therein,

Stressing the interlinkages between poverty, malnutrition, lack of or inadequate or inaccessible health-care services, early childbearing, child, early and forced marriage, violence against young women and girls and gender discrimination as root causes of obstetric fistula, and that poverty remains the main social risk factor,

Recognizing that the difficult socioeconomic conditions that exist in many developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, have resulted in the acceleration of the feminization of poverty,

Recognizing also that early childbearing increases the risk of complications during pregnancy and delivery and entails a much higher risk of maternal mortality and morbidity, and deeply concerned that early childbearing and limited access to the highest attainable standard of health, including sexual and reproductive health, specifically timely access to high-quality emergency obstetric care, cause high levels of obstetric fistula and other maternal morbidities, as well as maternal mortality,

Recognizing further that adolescent girls are at particular risk of maternal death and morbidity, including obstetric fistula, and concerned that the leading cause of death among girls aged 15 to 19 in many low- and middle-income countries is complications from pregnancy and childbirth and that women aged 30 and older are at increased risk of developing complications and of dying during childbirth,

Noting that a human rights-based approach to eliminating obstetric fistula is underpinned by the principles of, inter alia, accountability, participation, transparency, empowerment, sustainability, non-discrimination and international cooperation,

Deeply concerned about discrimination against women and girls and the violation of their rights, which often result in less access for girls to education and nutrition, their reduced physical and mental health and the enjoyment by girls of fewer of the rights, opportunities and benefits of childhood and adolescence compared with boys, and in their often being subjected to various forms of cultural, social, sexual and economic exploitation and to violence and harmful practices,

Deeply concerned also about the situation of women living with or recovering from obstetric fistula, who are often neglected and stigmatized,

Recognizing the need to raise awareness among men and adolescent boys and, in this context, to fully engage men and community leaders as strategic partners and allies in the efforts to address and eliminate obstetric fistula,

Welcoming the contribution by Member States, the international community and civil society to the global Campaign to End Fistula led by the United Nations Population Fund, bearing in mind that a people-centred approach to social and economic development is fundamental for protecting and empowering individuals and communities,

Deeply concerned that, as the Campaign to End Fistula has completed its tenth anniversary, while some progress has been made, significant challenges remain that require the intensification of efforts at all levels to end obstetric fistula,

Recognizing the Secretary-General’s Global Strategy for Women’s and Children’s Health, undertaken by a broad coalition of partners, in support of national plans and strategies aimed at significantly reducing the number of maternal, newborn and under-five child deaths and disabilities as a matter of immediate concern by scaling up a priority package of high-impact interventions and integrating efforts in sectors such as health, education, gender equality, water and sanitation, poverty eradication and nutrition,

Welcoming the various national, regional and international initiatives on all the Millennium Development Goals, including those undertaken bilaterally and through South-South cooperation, in support of national plans and strategies in sectors such as health, education, gender
equality, energy, water and sanitation, poverty eradication and nutrition as a way to reduce the number of maternal, newborn and under-five child deaths.

Welcoming also ongoing partnerships between stakeholders at all levels to address the multifaceted determinants of maternal, newborn and child health in close coordination with Member States based on their needs and priorities, including beyond 2015, and in this regard welcoming further the commitments to accelerate progress on the health-related Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

Reaffirming the renewed and reinforced commitments made by Member States to achieve Millennium Development Goal 5 by 2015 and to continue with these efforts beyond 2015.

Recalling its resolution 68/309 of 10 September 2014 on the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, in which it decided that the proposal of the Open Working Group contained in the report shall be the main basis for integrating sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda, while recognizing that other inputs will also be considered, in the intergovernmental negotiation process at the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly, and in this regard noting the importance of continuing efforts to end obstetric fistula,

1. Recognizes that interlinkages between poverty, lack of or inadequate access to health-care services, early childbearing and child, early and forced marriage as root causes of obstetric fistula, that poverty and inequality remain the main social risk factor and that the eradication of poverty is critical to meeting the needs and rights of women and girls, and calls upon States, in collaboration with the international community, to take accelerated action to address the situation;

2. Stresses the need to address the social issues that contribute to the problem of obstetric fistula, such as poverty, lack of or inadequate education for women and girls, lack of access to health-care services, including sexual and reproductive health-care services, early childbearing, child, early and forced marriage and the low status of women and girls;

3. Calls upon States to take all measures necessary to ensure the right of women and girls to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health, including sexual and reproductive health, and reproductive rights, in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences, and to develop sustainable health systems and social services with a view to ensuring access to such systems and services without discrimination, while paying special attention to adequate food and nutrition, water and sanitation, family planning information, increasing women’s empowerment, knowledge and awareness and ensuring equitable access to high-quality appropriate prenatal and delivery care for the prevention of obstetric fistula and the reduction of health inequities, as well as postnatal care for the detection and early management of fistula cases;

4. Also calls upon States to ensure the right to education of good quality for women and girls, on an equal basis with men and boys, and to ensure that they complete a full course of primary education, and to renew their efforts to improve and expand girls’ and women’s education at all levels, including at the secondary and higher levels, and including age-appropriate sex education, as well as vocational education and technical training, in order to, inter alia, achieve gender equality, the empowerment of women and girls and poverty eradication;

5. Urges States to enact and strictly enforce laws to ensure that marriage, including in rural and remote areas, is entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses and, in addition, to enact and strictly enforce laws concerning the minimum legal age of consent and the minimum age for marriage, and to raise the minimum age for marriage where necessary;

6. Calls upon the international community to provide intensified technical and financial support, in particular to high-burden countries, to accelerate progress towards the achievement of Millennium Development Goal 5 by 2015 and the elimination of obstetric fistula in the remaining days of the Millennium Development Goals and beyond 2015;

7. Urges multilateral donors, international financial institutions and regional development banks in the public and private sectors, within their respective mandates, to review and implement policies to support national efforts and institutional capacity-building to end obstetric fistula and to ensure that a higher proportion of resources reach young women and girls, in particular in rural and remote areas, as well as to ensure that needed funding is increased, predictable and sustained;

8. Calls upon the international community to support the activities of the United Nations Population Fund and other partners, including the World Health Organization, in the global Campaign to End Fistula in establishing and financing regional fistula treatment and training centres and, where necessary, national centres, by identifying and supporting health facilities that have the potential to serve as centres for treatment, training and convalescent care;

9. Calls upon States to accelerate progress in order to improve maternal health in the remaining days of the Millennium Development Goals and beyond 2015, by addressing sexual and reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health in a comprehensive manner, inter alia, through the provision of family planning, prenatal care, skilled attendance at birth, emergency obstetric and newborn care, postnatal care and methods of prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases and infections, such as HIV, within strengthened health-care systems that provide equal access to affordable, equitable and high-quality integrated health-care services and include community-based preventive and clinical care, as also reflected in the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals, entitled “Keeping the promise: united to achieve the Millennium Development Goals”, and in the Secretary-General’s Global Strategy for Women’s and Children’s Health;

10. Urges the international community to address the shortage of doctors and the inequitable distribution of midwives, nurses and other health-care workers trained in lifesaving obstetric care, and of space and supplies, which limit the capacity of most fistula centres;

11. Commends the commemoration by the international community of 23 May as the International Day to End Obstetric Fistula and the decision to continue to use the International Day each year to significantly raise awareness and intensify actions towards ending obstetric fistula;

12. Calls upon States and/or the relevant funds and programmes, organs and the specialized agencies of the
United Nations system, within their respective mandates, and invites the international financial institutions and all relevant actors of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, and the private sector:

(a) To redouble their efforts to meet the internationally agreed goal of improving maternal health by making maternal health-care services and obstetric fistula treatment accessibly to skilled attendance at birth and timely access to high-quality emergency obstetric care and family planning, as well as appropriate prenatal and postnatal care;

(b) To make greater investments in strengthening health systems, ensuring adequately trained and skilled human resources, especially midwives, obstetricians, gynaecologists and doctors, and providing support for the development and maintenance of infrastructure, as well as investments in referral mechanisms, equipment and supply chains, to improve maternal and newborn health-care services and ensure that women and girls have access to the full continuum of care, with functional quality control and monitoring mechanisms in place for all areas of service delivery;

(c) To support the training of doctors, nurses and other health-care workers in lifesaving obstetric care, especially midwives, who are the front-line workers in the fight to prevent obstetric fistula and maternal and newborn mortality, and include training on fistula repair, treatment and care as a standard element of the training curricula of health professionals;

(d) To ensure equitable access through national policies, plans and programmes that make maternal and newborn health-care services, particularly family planning, skilled attendance at birth, emergency obstetric and newborn care and obstetric fistula treatment, financially accessible, including in rural and remote areas and among the poorest women and girls, through, where appropriate, the establishment and distribution of health-care facilities and trained medical personnel, collaboration with the transport sector for affordable transport options, the promotion of and support for community-based solutions and the provision of incentives and other means to secure the presence in rural and remote areas of qualified health-care professionals who are able to perform interventions to prevent obstetric fistula;

(e) To develop, implement and support national and international prevention, care and treatment and socioeconomic reintegration and support strategies, policies and plans to eliminate obstetric fistula, to develop further multisectoral, multidisciplinary, comprehensive and integrated action plans in order to bring about lasting solutions and put an end to maternal mortality and morbidity and obstetric fistula, including by ensuring access to affordable, accessible, comprehensive, high-quality maternal health-care services and, within countries, to incorporate into all sectors of national budgets policy and programmatic approaches to address inequities and reach poor, vulnerable women and girls;

(f) To establish or strengthen, as appropriate, a national task force for obstetric fistula, led by the Ministry of Health, to enhance national coordination and improve partner collaboration to end obstetric fistula;

(g) To strengthen the capacity of health-care systems, in particular public health systems, to provide the essential services needed to prevent obstetric fistula and to treat existing cases by increasing national budgets for health, ensuring that adequate funds are allocated to reproductive health, including for obstetric fistula, ensuring access to fistula treatment through increased availability of trained, expert fistula surgeons and permanent, holistic fistula services integrated into strategically selected hospitals, thereby addressing the significant backlog of women and girls awaiting surgical repair of fistula, and encouraging communication among fistula centres to facilitate training, research, advocacy and fundraising and the application of relevant medical standards, including consideration of the use of the World Health Organization manual entitled “Obstetric Fistula: Guiding Principles for Clinical Management and Programme Development”, which provides background information and principles for developing fistula prevention and treatment programmes, as appropriate;

(h) To mobilize funding to provide free or adequately subsidized maternal health-care and obstetric fistula repair and treatment services, including by encouraging networking among providers and the sharing of new treatment techniques and protocols to protect women’s and children’s well-being and survival and to prevent the recurrence of subsequent fistulas by making post-surgery follow-up and the tracking of fistula patients a routine and key component of all fistula programmes, and also to ensure access to elective caesarean sections for fistula survivors who become pregnant again in order to prevent fistula recurrence and to increase the chances of survival of mother and baby in all subsequent pregnancies;

(i) To ensure that all women and girls who have undergone fistula treatment, including the forgotten women and girls with incurable or inoperable fistula, are provided with and have access to comprehensive health-care services, holistic social integration services and careful follow-up, including counselling, education, family planning and socioeconomic empowerment, for as long as needed, through, inter alia, skills development and income-generating activities, so that they can overcome abandonment and social exclusion, and to develop linkages with civil society organizations and women’s and girls’ empowerment programmes so as to help to achieve this goal;

(j) To empower fistula survivors to contribute to community sensitization and mobilization as advocates for fistula elimination, safe motherhood and newborn survival;

(k) To educate individual women and men, girls and boys, communities, policymakers and health professionals about how obstetric fistula can be prevented and treated, and increase awareness of the needs of pregnant women and girls, as well as of those who have undergone surgical fistula repair, including their right to the highest attainable standard of health, including sexual and reproductive health, by working with community and religious leaders, traditional birth attendants, women and girls who have suffered from fistula, the media, social workers, civil society, women’s organizations, influential public figures and policymakers;

(l) To enhance the participation of men and adolescent boys in the intensification of efforts to end obstetric fistula and to further strengthen their involvement as partners, including in the Campaign to End Fistula;

(m) To strengthen awareness-raising and advocacy, including through the media, to effectively reach families and communities with key messages on fistula prevention and treatment and social reintegration;
(n) To strengthen research, monitoring and evaluation systems, including by developing a community- and facility-based mechanism for the systematic notification of obstetric fistula cases and maternal and newborn deaths to ministries of health, and their recording in a national register, and by acknowledging obstetric fistula as a nationally notifiable condition, triggering immediate reporting, tracking and follow-up for the purpose of guiding the development and implementation of maternal health programmes;

(o) To strengthen research, data collection, monitoring and evaluation to guide the planning and implementation of maternal health programmes, including for obstetric fistula, by conducting up-to-date needs assessments on emergency obstetric and newborn care and for fistula and routine reviews of maternal deaths and near-miss cases as part of a national maternal death surveillance and response system, integrated within national health information systems;

(p) To improve data collection, pre- and post-surgery, to measure progress in addressing the needs for surgical treatment and the quality of surgery, rehabilitation and socioeconomic reintegration services, including pre-surgery prospects for successful subsequent pregnancies, live births and severe health-related complications, so as to address the challenges of improving maternal health;

(q) To provide essential health-care services, equipment and supplies, skills training and income-generating projects to women and girls so that they can break out of the cycle of poverty;

13. Acknowledges that intensification of efforts is urgently needed to end obstetric fistula and, in this context, the importance of giving the issue due consideration in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda;

14. Invites Member States to contribute to efforts to end obstetric fistula, including, in particular, through the Campaign to End Fistula, as part of the endeavours to achieve Millennium Development Goal 5 by 2015, and to commit themselves to continue efforts to improve maternal health beyond 2015 with the aim of eliminating obstetric fistula globally;

15. Requests the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its seventy-first session on the implementation of the present resolution under the item entitled “Advancement of women”.

Traditional practices affecting the health of women and girls

Elimination of female genital mutilation

In response to General Assembly resolution 67/146 [YUN 2012, p. 1091], the Secretary-General submitted a July report [A/69/211] on ending female genital mutilation (FGM), which provided information on measures taken by Member States and activities within the UN system to address the practice, as well as recommendations for future action. Responses to the Secretary-General’s request for information were received from 13 Member States and 6 UN system entities.

The report described FGM as a form of violence against women and girls that could have both immediate and long-term consequences for their physical, sexual and mental health, and even result in death. In the 29 countries where the practice was concentrated, more than 125 million girls and women alive in 2014 had undergone FGM and a further 30 million girls might be at risk. The practice was most common in the western, eastern and north-eastern regions of Africa, and some countries in Asia and in the Middle East. Owing to increased migration, the practice was on the rise worldwide among communities of migrants from those areas. In many cultures, FGM appeared to be an important physical marker of insider/outside status and was intertwined with shared values such as sexual restraint and respect for one’s elders. Support for FGM was stronger among girls and women in the poorest households, and the data showed a strong association between level of education and support among women for the practice: support declined progressively with increased levels of education and income. In most countries where the practice was concentrated, most girls and women, as well as men, thought it should end. In all countries with available data, girls and women consistently underestimated the proportion of boys and men who wanted it to end. That indicated the importance of more open dialogue between men and women, and between boys and girls, so that social expectations concerning FGM could be challenged and traditional forums and decision-making influenced.

The report noted that the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Children’s Fund Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting: Accelerating Change completed its first phase in 2013 and had succeeded in accelerating the elimination of FGM with 8 million people in more than 12,000 communities in 15 countries publicly declaring their abandonment of the practice. In its second phase (2014–2017), the Joint Programme would contribute to accelerating the total elimination of FGM within the next generation.

Numerous efforts and initiatives had fostered change in social beliefs and behaviours, but the practice remained a grave concern in the 29 countries where it was concentrated. States had introduced relevant criminal offences and legal and policy reforms through the development of guidelines, but there remained insufficient enforcement of legislation and policies and limited allocation of resources for their implementation. Inadequate monitoring and accountability mechanisms and a lack of comparable data to facilitate trend analysis also hampered progress. The report highlighted the need for holistic strategies that addressed the root causes of those practices, such as gender inequality and provided recommendations for future actions.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 18 December [meeting 73], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/69/481], adopted resolution 69/150 without vote [agenda item 27 (a)].
Intensifying global efforts for the elimination of female genital mutilations

The General Assembly,


Reaffirming that the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, together with the Optional Protocols thereto, constitute an important contribution to the legal framework for the protection and promotion of the human rights of women and girls,

Reaffirming also the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development and their 5-, 10-, 15- and 20-year reviews, as well as the United Nations Millennium Declaration, and the commitments relevant to women and girls made at the 2005 World Summit, and reiterated in Assembly resolution 65/1 of 22 September 2010, entitled “Keeping the promise: united to achieve the Millennium Development Goals”,

Recalling the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, adopted in Maputo on 11 July 2003, which contains, inter alia, undertakings and commitments on ending female genital mutilation and marks a significant milestone towards the abandonment and ending of female genital mutilation,

Recalling also the decision of the African Union, adopted in Malabo on 1 July 2011, to support the adoption by the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session of a resolution banning female genital mutilation,

Recalling further the recommendation of the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-sixth session that the Economic and Social Council recommend to the General Assembly the adoption of a decision to consider the issue of ending female genital mutilation at its sixty-seventh session under the item entitled “Advancement of women”,

Recognizing that female genital mutilations constitute irreparable, irreversible harm that impairs the human rights of women and girls, affecting about 100 million to 140 million women and girls worldwide, and that each year an estimated further 3 million girls are at risk of being subjected to the practice throughout the world,

Reaffirming that female genital mutilations are a harmful practice, constituting a serious threat to the health of women and girls, including their psychological, sexual and reproductive health, increasing their vulnerability to HIV and possibly having adverse obstetric and prenatal outcomes, as well as fatal consequences for the mother and the newborn, and that the abandonment of this harmful practice can be achieved as a result of a comprehensive movement that involves all public and private stakeholders in society, including girls and boys, women and men,

Concerned about evidence of an increase in the incidence of female genital mutilations being carried out by medical personnel in all regions in which they are practised,

Recognizing that negative discriminatory stereotypical attitudes and behaviours have direct implications for the status and treatment of women and girls and that such negative stereotypes impede the implementation of legislative and normative frameworks that guarantee gender equality and prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex,

Recognizing also that the campaign of the Secretary-General entitled “unite to End Violence against Women” and the database on violence against women have contributed to addressing the elimination of female genital mutilations,

Welcoming the efforts of the United Nations system to end female genital mutilations, in particular the commitment of 10 United Nations entities, announced in their joint inter-agency statement of 27 February 2008 on eliminating female genital mutilation, as well as the Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting: Accelerating Change of the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Children’s Fund, to accelerate the elimination of the practice,

Commending the continued efforts and actions undertaken by States, individually and collectively, regional organizations and United Nations agencies for the elimination of female genital mutilation as well as the implementation of its resolution 67/146,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General,

Noting with disappointment, in this regard, the continuing need for the information requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/146, which was not provided, concerning the root causes of and factors contributing to the practice of female genital mutilations, its prevalence worldwide and its impact on women and girls, including evidence and data, analysis of progress made to date and action-oriented recommendations for eliminating this practice on the basis of information provided by Member States, relevant actors of the United Nations system working on the issue and other relevant stakeholders,

Deeply concerned that, despite the increase in national, regional and international efforts and the focus on the abandonment of female genital mutilations, the practice continues to persist in all regions of the world, and is often on the rise for migrant women and girls,

Deeply concerned also that a tremendous gap in resources continues to exist and that the shortfall in funding has severely limited the scope and pace of programmes and activities for the elimination of female genital mutilations,

Recalling its resolution 68/309 of 10 September 2014, on the report of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, in which it decided that the proposal of the Open Working Group contained in the report shall be the main basis for integrating sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda, while recognizing that other inputs will also be considered, in the intergovernmental negotiation process at the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly, and noting that the report integrates the importance of the elimination of all harmful practices to women and girls, including female genital mutilation,

1. Stresses that the empowerment of women and girls is key to breaking the cycle of discrimination and violence
and for the promotion and protection of human rights, including the right to the highest attainable standard of mental and physical health, including sexual and reproductive health, and calls upon States parties to fulfil their obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, as well as their commitments to implement the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”, and of the special session of the Assembly on children;

2. **Calls upon** States to place a stronger focus on the development of comprehensive prevention strategies, including the enhancement of educational campaigns, awareness-raising and formal, non-formal and informal education and training in order to promote the direct engagement of girls and boys, women and men and to ensure that all key actors, Government officials, including law enforcement and judicial personnel, immigration officials, health-care providers, civil society, community and religious leaders, teachers, employers, media professionals and those directly working with girls, as well as parents, families and communities, work to eliminate attitudes and harmful practices, in particular all forms of female genital mutilations, that negatively affect women and girls;

3. **Also calls upon** States to strengthen advocacy and awareness-raising programmes, to mobilize girls and boys to take an active part in developing preventive and elimination programmes to address harmful practices, especially female genital mutilations, and to engage local community and religious leaders, educational institutions, the media and families and provide increased financial support to efforts at all levels to end discriminatory social norms and practices;

4. **Urges** States to condemn all harmful practices that affect women and girls, in particular female genital mutilations, whether committed within or outside a medical institution, and to take all necessary measures, especially through educational campaigns, including enacting and enforcing legislation, to prohibit female genital mutilations and to protect women and girls from this form of violence, and to hold perpetrators to account;

5. **Also urges** States to complement punitive measures with awareness-raising and educational activities designed to promote a process of consensus towards the elimination of female genital mutilations, and further urges States to protect and support women and girls who have been subjected to female genital mutilations and those at risk, including by developing social and psychological support services and care, and to explore other remedies, as appropriate, and take measures to improve their health, including sexual and reproductive health, in order to assist women and girls who are subjected to the practice;

6. **Further urges** States, as appropriate, to promote gender-sensitive, empowering educational processes by reviewing and revising school curricula, educational materials and teacher-training programmes and elaborating policies and programmes of zero tolerance for violence against girls, including female genital mutilations, and to further integrate a comprehensive understanding of the causes and consequences of gender-based violence and discrimination against women and girls into education and training curricula at all levels;

7. **Urges** States to ensure that the protection and provision of support to women and girls subject to, or at risk of, female genital mutilation are an integral part of policies and programmes that address the practice and to provide women and girls with coordinated, specialized, accessible and quality multisectoral prevention and response, including education, as well as legal, psychological, health-care and social services, provided by qualified personnel, consistent with the guidelines of medical ethics;

8. **Calls upon** States to ensure that national action plans and strategies on the elimination of female genital mutilations are comprehensive and multidisciplinary in scope and that they include projected timelines for goals and incorporate clear targets and indicators for the effective monitoring, impact assessment and coordination of programmes among all relevant stakeholders and promote their participation, including the participation of affected groups, practising communities and non-governmental organizations, in the development, implementation and evaluation of such plans and strategies;

9. **Urges** States to take, within the general framework of integration policies and in consultation with affected communities, effective and specific targeted measures for refugee women and women migrants and their communities in order to protect girls from female genital mutilations, including when the practice occurs outside the country of residence;

10. **Calls upon** States to develop information and awareness-raising campaigns and programmes to systematically reach the general public, relevant professionals, families and communities, including through the media, featuring television and radio discussions, on the elimination of female genital mutilations;

11. **Urges** States to pursue a comprehensive, culturally sensitive, systematic approach that incorporates a social perspective and is based on human rights and gender-equality principles in providing education and training to families, local community leaders and members of all professions relevant to the protection and empowerment of women and girls in order to increase awareness of and commitment to the elimination of female genital mutilations;

12. **Also urges** States to ensure the national implementation of international and regional commitments and obligations undertaken as States parties to various international instruments protecting the full enjoyment of all human rights and the fundamental freedoms of women and girls;

13. **Calls upon** States to develop policies and regulations to ensure the effective implementation of national legislative frameworks on eliminating discrimination and violence against women and girls, in particular female genital mutilations, and to put in place adequate accountability mechanisms at the national and local levels to monitor adherence to and implementation of these legislative frameworks;

14. **Also calls upon** States to develop unified methods and standards for the collection of data on all forms of discrimination and violence against girls, especially forms that are underdocumented, such as female genital mutilations, to develop additional indicators so as to effectively measure progress in eliminating the practice and to rein-
force the sharing of good practices relating to the prevention and the abandonment of the practice at the subregional and regional levels;

15. **Urges** States to allocate sufficient resources to the implementation of policies and programmes and legislative frameworks aimed at eliminating female genital mutilations;

16. **Calls upon** States to develop, support and implement comprehensive and integrated strategies for the prevention of female genital mutilations, including the training of social workers, medical personnel, community and religious leaders and relevant professionals, and to ensure that they provide competent, supportive services and care to women and girls who are at risk of or who have undergone female genital mutilations and encourage them to report to the appropriate authorities cases in which they believe women or girls are at risk;

17. **Also calls upon** States to support, as part of a comprehensive approach to eliminate female genital mutilations, programmes that engage local community practitioners of female genital mutilations in community-based initiatives for the abandonment of the practice, including, where relevant, the identification by communities of alternative livelihoods for them;

18. **Calls upon** the international community, the relevant United Nations entities and civil society and international financial institutions to continue to actively support, through the allocation of increased financial resources and technical assistance, targeted comprehensive programmes that address the needs and priorities of women and girls at risk of or subjected to female genital mutilations;

19. **Calls upon** the international community to strongly support, including through increased financial support, a second phase of the Joint Programme on Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting: Accelerating Change of the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Children’s Fund, which will run until 2017, as well as national programmes focused on the elimination of female genital mutilations;

20. **Stresses** that some progress has been made in combating female genital mutilations in a number of countries using a common coordinated approach that promotes positive social change at the community, national, regional and international levels, and recalls the goal set out in the United Nations inter-agency statement that female genital mutilations are to be eliminated within a generation, with some of the main achievements being obtained by 2015, in line with the Millennium Development Goals;

21. **Encourages** men and boys to take positive initiatives and to work in partnership with women and girls to combat violence and discriminatory practices against women and girls, in particular female genital mutilations, through networks, peer programmes, information campaigns and training programmes;

22. **Calls upon** States, the United Nations system, civil society and all stakeholders to continue to observe 6 February as the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation and to use the day to enhance awareness-raising campaigns and to take concrete actions against female genital mutilations;

23. **Calls upon** States to improve the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data and, where appropriate, to collaborate with existing data collection systems, which are crucial for evidence-based legal and policy development, programme design and implementation and the monitoring of the elimination of female genital mutilation;

24. **Acknowledges** that intensifying efforts for the elimination of female genital mutilations is needed and, in this regard, the importance of giving the issue due consideration in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda;

25. **Requests** the Secretary-General to ensure that all relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, in particular the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children’s Fund, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the World Health Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Development Programme and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, individually and collectively, take into account the protection and promotion of the rights of women and girls against female genital mutilations in their country programmes, as appropriate and in accordance with national priorities, in order to further strengthen their efforts in this regard;

26. **Renews its request** to the Secretary-General that he submit to the General Assembly, at its seventy-first session, an in-depth multidisciplinary report on the root causes of and factors contributing to the practice of female genital mutilations, its prevalence worldwide and its impact on women and girls, including evidence and data, analysis of progress made to date and action-oriented recommendations for eliminating this practice on the basis of information provided by Member States, relevant actors of the United Nations system working on the issue and other relevant stakeholders.

### Women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS

#### Report of Secretary-General

Pursuant to Commission on the Status of Women resolution 56/5 [YUN 2012, p. 1093], the Secretary-General submitted a report [E/CN.6/2014/12] on women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS, which provided information on the activities undertaken by 18 Member States and 11 UN entities to implement the resolution.

He reported that persistent gender inequality and human rights violations putting women and girls at greater risk of infection continued to hamper progress in preventing the spread of HIV and increasing access to antiretroviral treatment. In addition to women’s and girls’ biological susceptibility to HIV, sociocultural, economic and legal challenges compounded their vulnerability to infection. Challenges to the health and well-being of women and girls persisted across countries and hindered efforts to mitigate the epidemic. Such challenges included a lack of accessible and affordable health services, education and employment opportunities; inequitable property and inheritance rights; harmful cultural norms; and child marriage. Member States had made progress in improving the situation of women and girls infected with and affected by HIV, but further and accelerated action was required at the national, regional
and international levels. Significant gaps persisted in action and funding to provide gender-responsive programmes and services that took into consideration the barriers brought on by structural and social realities. More effort was required to eradicate harmful gender norms and discriminatory laws and promote the participation of women and girls in national and international decision-making processes.

The Secretary-General suggested that the Commission encourage Member States to adopt the following strategies: ensure that HIV plans and policies prioritized the needs of women and girls and that targeted programmatic actions were costed, budgeted for and implemented; expand the evidence base, including through the collection and disaggregation of data by sex and age to guide interventions and ensure that the needs of women and girls were addressed; review laws, regulations and programmes that addressed the rights of women and girls living with and affected by HIV and institutionalize legal frameworks to ensure the elimination of discrimination on the basis of HIV status, gender and sexual orientation; invest in actions that tackled the structural drivers of HIV, such as by increasing the access of women and girls to employment and education; increase access to treatment, prevention and care services for women and girls; and implement legislation and commitments that promoted the sexual and reproductive health needs and rights of women and girls.

Commission action. On 21 March, the Commission on the Status of Women adopted a resolution [E/2014/27 (res. 58/3)] on women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS, which called on Governments, the international community, the UN system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to intensify their support of national efforts against HIV/AIDS and that prioritized the needs of women and girls; recommended that a bold vision for addressing the HIV epidemic, including the situation of women and girls living with and affected by HIV and AIDS, be given due consideration in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda; and requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the situation of women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS to the Commission at its sixtieth (2016) session.

Eliminating maternal mortality

In response to Commission on the Status of Women resolution 56/3 [YUN 2012, p. 1094], the Secretary-General submitted a report [E/CN.6/2014/11] describing UN system actions to strengthen linkages among programmes, initiatives and activities for gender equality, the empowerment of women and girls, the protection of their human rights and the elimination of preventable maternal mortality and morbidity. Fifteen Member States and 12 UN entities contributed information for the report.

According to the 2013 MDG report, the maternal mortality ratio had declined globally by 47 per cent, from 400 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births in 1990 to 210 in 2010, but there remained large disparities in maternal mortality ratios across and within countries. The vast majority of maternal deaths occurred in developing countries; notably, the maternal mortality ratio was 15 times higher in developing countries than in high-income countries. The major causes of maternal deaths were haemorrhage, infection/sepsis, unsafe abortion, pre-eclampsia and eclampsia, and prolonged or obstructed labour. HIV/AIDS and malaria were also significant contributing causes, and in a number of countries, high fertility rates continued to account for high maternal mortality. Many pregnant women in developing countries still did not receive the minimum standard of antenatal care and were not attended to by skilled medical personnel at the time of delivery, and the situation of pregnant women was even more challenging in remote and rural areas.

The Secretary-General concluded that actions by Member States and UN entities had led to greater resource commitments; increased collaboration and accountability for progress; and increased interventions addressing the human rights of women and the root causes of maternal mortality, which included gender inequality, violence against women and girls, poverty, malnutrition, harmful practices, and a lack of accessible and appropriate health-care services, information and education. Limited information and analysis, however, had been provided on the implementation of interventions with a human rights-based approach that addressed those root causes, the effectiveness of such interventions and the allocation of sufficient resources to that end. As maternal mortality and morbidity ratios remained high in many countries and subpopulations around the world, efforts should continue not only to strengthen the response of the health sector but also to ensure that the key principles of gender equality and women’s empowerment were integrated into responses at all levels.

Recommendations for Member States included the intensification of actions to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity within a gender equality framework; the elimination of structural barriers to the enjoyment of reproductive health; the use of legal and policy frameworks and programmes to address the root causes of maternal mortality and morbidity; and the adoption and implementation of laws to protect women and girls from violence and harmful practices, including child, early and forced marriages.

Violence against women

Report of Secretary-General. In response to General Assembly resolution 67/144 [YUN 2012, p. 1095], the Secretary-General submitted an August report
against women [YUN 2013, p. 1262], which would allow a set of nine core indicators for surveys on violence the endorsement by the UN Statistical Commission invasive, though varied across countries, with no legal consequences for the majority of the perpetrators.

Global estimates showed that 35 per cent of women worldwide had experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence; and regional studies showed similar findings. A regional study on male behaviour demonstrated that the perpetration of rape was pervasive, though varied across countries, with no legal consequences for the majority of the perpetrators.

Developments at the global and UN level included the endorsement by the UN Statistical Commission of a set of nine core indicators for surveys on violence against women [YUN 2013, p. 1262], which would allow for better comparison and monitoring of trends over time.

The Secretary-General’s campaign “unıte to End Violence against Women” continued its advocacy at the global, regional and national levels and engaged multiple stakeholders, including high-level officials, including through the Secretary-General’s Network of Men Leaders. The campaign emphasized the engagement of young people, particularly through the unıte Global Youth Network, and declared the twenty-fifth of each month as Orange Day, a day for action against violence against women and girls. The initiative “United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict” strengthened its responses to conflict-related sexual violence through intensified advocacy at the global level, the deployment of advisers and technical support in more than 10 countries, and the development of policy and guidance notes on reparations and the provision of services to survivors. Measures were also taken in more than 20 countries to strengthen policy development and coordination among actors.

Actions by States to prevent and address violence against women included the strengthening of legal, policy and institutional frameworks as well as coordination among different stakeholders, with efforts focused on legal reforms as well as gender inequality. Although there was limited information about long-term support for victims and survivors, States had focused on addressing the immediate needs of women in the aftermath of violence through the provision of services. Such services, however, remained insufficient and limited to central locations. The prevention of violence was still an area under development, and largely limited to awareness-raising initiatives.

The Secretary-General presented recommendations for addressing the following challenges: the limited allocation of resources to implement laws, policies and programmes and insufficient monitoring and evaluation of their impact; the lack of reliable data to monitor progress; the lack of coordination among multiple stakeholders; the underreporting of incidents and high attrition rates; and the discriminatory attitudes of officials handling cases of victims and survivors and insufficient legislation enforcement.

Report of Special Rapporteur. On 1 September, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 67/144 [YUN 2012, p. 1095], the Secretary-General transmitted to the Assembly the report [A/69/368] of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences. The report focused on violence against women as a barrier to the realization of women’s civil, political, economic, social, cultural and development rights and the effective exercise of citizenship rights, and presented recommendations to address such violence (see p. 873).


The Fund awarded $8.3 million in 25 grants covering 23 countries and territories. Twenty-two civil society organizations, two Governments and the UN country team in Fiji received grants that together were expected to reach over 730,000 primary beneficiaries by the end of 2018. In terms of grant value, 28 per cent of the funds allocated went to programmes in Asia and the Pacific; 26 per cent to Africa; 14 per cent to Europe and Central Asia; 12 per cent to Latin America and the Caribbean; 11 per cent to the Arab States and North Africa; and 9 per cent to cross-regional programmes. Grants amounting to 8 per cent of the total ($700,000) were awarded to eight small organizations (those requesting less than $100,000) as part of the Fund’s new strategy to increase funding to smaller grass-roots organizations. Six new programmes in the Gambia, Togo, the State of Palestine, Nepal, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan would address harmful practices; and seven new grantees in Albania, Colombia, Egypt, Guatemala, Serbia, Thailand and Zimbabwe would work to address and prevent violence against women who faced discrimination and exclusion.

By the end of the year, the Fund had a portfolio of 95 active grants covering 75 countries and territories, with a total value of $56,311,108.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 18 December [meeting 73], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/69/481], adopted resolution 69/147 without vote [agenda item 27 (a)].
Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls

The General Assembly,
Recalling further Human Rights Council resolutions 17/11 of 17 June 2011, 20/12 of 5 July 2012 and 23/25 of 14 June 2013, as well as Council resolutions 26/5 and 26/15 of 26 June 2014 on the elimination of discrimination against women and on accelerating efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women,
Reaffirming the obligation of all States to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms, and reaffirming also that discrimination on the basis of sex is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocols thereto, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and other international human rights instruments, such as the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, and that its elimination is a cross-cutting issue and an integral part of efforts towards the elimination of all forms of violence against women,
Reaffirming the rules of international humanitarian law, including the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocols thereto of 1977,
Reaffirming the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome documents of its review conferences and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”,
Reaffirming also the declarations adopted at the forty-ninth and fifty-fourth sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women and the agreed conclusions on the priority theme “Elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls” adopted at its fifty-seventh session, and welcoming the attention given to the elimination of violence against women and girls in the agreed conclusions of the Commission at its fifty-eighth session on the challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls,
Reaffirming further the international commitments in the field of social development regarding gender equality and the advancement of women made at the World Conference on Human Rights, the International Conference on Population and Development and in the key actions for the further implementation of its Programme of Action, at the World Summit for Social Development and the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance and in the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples, adopted on 22 September 2014, as well as those made in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, at the 2005 World Summit and at the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals, and noting the attention paid to the elimination of all forms of violence against women in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, adopted by the Assembly in its resolution 61/295 of 13 September 2007, as well as in the Declaration of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development of 3 October 2013,
Recalling that the proposal of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals contained in its report shall be the main basis for integrating sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda, while recognizing that other inputs will also be considered, in the intergovernmental negotiation process at the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly, and in this regard taking note with appreciation of the reference to gender equality, women’s empowerment and the need to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls contained therein,
Reaffirming the need for the full and effective participation of women in sustainable development policies, programmes and decision-making at all levels, as agreed in the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, and taking note of the statement adopted by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women at its fifty-seventh session on the post-2015 development agenda and the elimination of discrimination against women, including its emphasis on accountability,
Recalling the inclusion of gender-related crimes and crimes of sexual violence in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, noting in this regard the undertakings of its Chief Prosecutor to strengthen efforts to combat impunity for sexual and gender-based violence, and recalling the recognition by the ad hoc international criminal tribunals that rape and other forms of sexual violence can constitute a war crime, a crime against humanity or a constitutive act with respect to genocide or torture,
Recalling also the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations “Protect, Respect and Remedy” Framework, including the responsibility of business enterprises to respect human rights, bearing in mind the different risks that may be faced by women and men,
Recognizing the importance of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and its role in leading, coordinating and promoting the accountability of the United Nations system in its work on gender equality and the empowerment of women,
Expressing its appreciation for the efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls and the high number of activities undertaken by the United Nations
bodies, entities, funds and programmes and the specialized agencies, including by the Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice, by the Special Rapporteurs of the Human Rights Council on violence against women, its causes and consequences, on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence and by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children,

Deeply concerned about the pervasiveness of violence against women and girls in all its different forms and manifestations worldwide, and reiterating the need to intensify efforts to prevent all forms of violence against women and girls throughout the world and to re-emphasize that violence against women and girls is unacceptable,

Emphasizing that States should continue to adopt and implement legislation and policies in accordance with their obligations under international law, and in particular in accordance with international human rights obligations and with their commitments, which address the issue of violence against women in a comprehensive manner, not only by criminalizing violence against women and girls and providing for punishment of the perpetrators, but also by including protection and preventive measures and access to just and effective remedies, including compensation and indemnification, for victims and survivors of violence against women and girls, with provisions for adequate funding for their implementation, while exercising due diligence in addressing violence against women, including in their role as contributors to peace operations led by the United Nations or regional organizations,

Undertaking the detrimental impact of sexual violence in armed conflict on women's participation in the resolution of conflict and in the post-conflict transition, reconstruction and peacebuilding processes,

Reaffirming the importance of effective accountability with regard to violence against women and girls, including sexual violence, abuse and exploitation, and of undertaking adequate measures to combat such violence,

Taking note, in this regard, of the Secretary-General's guidance note on reparations for conflict-related sexual violence,

Taking note also of international and regional initiatives to combat sexual violence in armed conflict, including the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict, which focused on justice, accountability and support for victims,

Recognizing that violence against women and girls is rooted in historical and structural inequality in power relations between men and women and that all forms of violence against women seriously; violate and impair or nullify the enjoyment by women and girls of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and constitute a major impediment to women's full, equal and effective participation in society, the economy and political decision-making,

Recognizing also that women's poverty and lack of empowerment, as well as their marginalization resulting from their exclusion from social policies and from the benefits of education and sustainable development, can place them at increased risk of violence, and that violence against women impedes the social and economic and therefore the sustainable development of communities and States, as well as the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

Acknowledging the need to address violence against women and girls holistically, including through the recognition of linkages between violence against women and girls and other issues, such as HIV/AIDS, poverty eradication, food security, peace and security, humanitarian assistance, education, access to justice, health and crime prevention,

Acknowledging also that trafficking in persons is one of the forms of transnational organized crime which exposes women to violence and that concerted efforts are needed to combat it, and in this regard stressing that full and effective implementation of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, as well as the full and effective implementation of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons, will contribute to the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls,

Gravely concerned about the unprecedented number of refugees and displaced persons globally, recognizing the particular vulnerability of women and children among refugees and displaced persons, including their exposure to discrimination and sexual and physical abuse, violence and exploitation, and in this regard acknowledging the importance of preventing, responding to and addressing sexual and gender-based violence,

Recognizing the need to address violence against women and girls resulting from transnational organized crime, including trafficking in persons and drug trafficking, and to adopt specific policies to prevent and eradicate violence against women in crime prevention strategies,

Expressing its appreciation for the efforts and the high number of activities undertaken by States to eliminate all forms of violence against women, which have resulted in the strengthening of legislation and the criminal justice system, including the adoption of national action plans, strategies and coordination mechanisms, the implementation of preventive and protective measures, as well as awareness-raising and capacity-building, for example through training for public officials and professionals, including the judiciary, the police and the military, and for educational and criminal justice professionals, the provision of support and services for women facing or subjected to violence and the improvement of data collection and analysis,

Recognizing that domestic violence remains widespread and affects women of all social strata across the world, and the need to eliminate such violence, and in this connection recognizing the work done by relevant parts of the United Nations system, such as UN-Women, the World Health Organization and the United Nations Population Fund,

Recognizing also the important role of the family in combating violence against women and girls and the need to support its capacity to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls,

Recognizing further the important role of the community, in particular men and boys, as well as civil society, including women human rights defenders and women's and youth
organizations and the media, in the efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls,

Recognizing the vulnerability of those who suffer multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, such as older women, indigenous women, migrant women and women with disabilities, and the particular risk of violence they face, and stressing the urgent need to address violence and discrimination against them,

Gravely concerned that impunity for violations and abuses against women human rights defenders persists owing to such factors as a lack of reporting, documentation, investigation and access to justice, social barriers and constraints with regard to addressing gender-based violence, including sexual violence, and the stigmatization that may result from such violations and abuses,

Alarmed by the acts of intolerance, violent extremism, violence, including sectarian violence, and terrorism in various parts of the world, which claim innocent lives, cause destruction and displace people, including women and girls,

Recognizing that the illicit use of and illicit trade in small arms, light weapons and ammunition aggravate violence, inter alia, against women and girls,

Taking note of the forthcoming entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty on 24 December 2014, which includes provisions for States parties regarding serious acts of gender-based violence or serious acts of violence against women and children,

1. Stresses that “violence against women” means any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women and girls, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life, and also notes the economic and social harm caused by such violence;

2. Recognizes that gender-based violence is a form of discrimination that seriously inhibits women’s ability to enjoy rights and freedoms on a basis of equality with men;

3. Also recognizes that violence against women and girls persists in every country in the world as a pervasive violation of the enjoyment of human rights and a major impediment to achieving gender equality, development, peace, security and the internationally agreed development goals, in particular the Millennium Development Goals;

4. Further recognizes that all human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent and interrelated and that the international community must treat human rights globally in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing and with the same emphasis, and stresses that, while the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds must be borne in mind, it is the duty of States, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms;

5. Stresses that it is important that States strongly condemn all forms of violence against women and refrain from invoking any custom, tradition or religious consideration to avoid their obligations with respect to its elimination as set out in the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women;

6. Strongly condemns the targeting of civilian populations, including women and girls, in violation of international law, by violent extremists, and calls upon all States to intensify their efforts to counter violent extremism, including by addressing the conditions conducive to its spread, while ensuring that those efforts comply with their obligations under international law;

7. Also strongly condemns all acts of violence against women and girls, whether those acts are perpetrated by the State, by private persons or by non-State actors, including business enterprises, and calls for the elimination of all forms of gender-based violence in the family, within the general community and where perpetrated or condoned by the State;

8. Stresses that States have the obligation, at all levels, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, including women and girls, and must exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate, prosecute and hold to account the perpetrators of violence against women and girls and eliminate impunity and provide for access to appropriate remedies for victims and survivors, and should ensure the protection and empowerment of women and girls, including adequate enforcement by police and the judiciary of civil remedies, orders of protection and criminal sanctions, and the provision of shelters, psycho-social services, counselling, health-care and other types of support services, in order to avoid revictimization, and that to do so contributes to the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms by women subjected to violence;

9. Welcomes the report of the Secretary-General on the intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women, as well as the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on violence against women, its causes and consequences;

10. Also welcomes the efforts and contributions at the local, national, regional and international levels to eliminate all forms of violence against women, including by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, and encourages States to consider ratifying or acceding to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol;

11. Expresses its appreciation for the progress achieved in the Secretary-General’s 2008–2015 campaign “Unite to End Violence against Women” and the regional components of the campaign, and stresses the need to accelerate the implementation of concrete follow-up activities by the United Nations system to end all forms of violence against women;

12. Welcomes the contributions already made by States, the private sector and other donors to the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women, while stressing the importance of the need for further funding of the Fund in order to provide support for national, regional and international actions, including those taken by governmental and non-governmental organizations working to prevent and end violence against women and girls;

13. Reaffirms that the persistence of armed conflicts in various parts of the world is a major impediment to the elimination of all forms of violence against women, and, bearing in mind that armed and other types of conflicts and terrorism and hostage-taking still persist in many parts of the world and that aggression, foreign occupation and ethnic and other types of conflicts are an ongoing reality, affect-
ing women and men in nearly every region, calls upon all States and the international community to place particular focus on their plight, to give priority attention and increased assistance to relieving the suffering of women and girls living in such situations and to ensure that, where violence is committed against them, all perpetrators of such violence are duly investigated and, as appropriate, prosecuted and punished in order to end impunity, including by appropriate authorities contributing police, military or civilian personnel serving in peacekeeping missions, while stressing the need to respect international humanitarian law and human rights law, and invites States to consider the various provisions on sexual and gender-based violence set out in relevant international instruments, including, where appropriate, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court;

14. Stresses the need for the exclusion of killing and maiming of women and girls, as prohibited under international law, and crimes of sexual violence from amnesty provisions in the context of conflict resolution processes and to address such acts during all stages of the armed conflict, conflict resolution and post-conflict situations, including through transitional justice mechanisms, while ensuring the full and effective participation of women in such processes;

15. Also stresses the importance of ensuring that in armed conflict and post-conflict situations and in natural disaster situations, the prevention of and response to all forms of violence against women and girls, including sexual and gender-based violence, are prioritized and effectively addressed, including, as appropriate, through the investigation, prosecution and punishment of perpetrators to end impunity, the removal of barriers to women's access to justice, the establishment of complaint and reporting mechanisms and the provision of support to victims and survivors, affordable and accessible health-care services, including sexual and reproductive health care, and reintegration measures, as well as by taking steps to increase women's participation in conflict resolution and peacebuilding missions and processes and post-conflict decision-making;

16. Further stresses that, despite important steps taken by many countries around the world, States should continue to focus on the prevention of violence against women and girls, as well as on their protection, their empowerment and the provision of services, and should therefore implement laws and policies for ending violence against women and girls and monitor and rigorously evaluate the implementation of available programmes, policies and laws and improve, where possible, their impact, accessibility and effectiveness;

17. Stresses that States should take measures to ensure that all officials responsible for implementing policies and programmes aimed at preventing violence against women and girls, protecting and assisting victims and investigating and punishing acts of violence receive ongoing and adequate training and access to information to sensitize them to the different and specific needs of women and girls, in particular those who have been subjected to violence, so that women and girls are not revictimized when seeking justice and redress, including in peacekeeping missions and processes and special political missions;

18. Also stresses that States should take all possible measures to empower and protect women against all forms of violence, to inform them of their human rights, including by disseminating information on the assistance available to women and families who have experienced violence and ensuring that timely and appropriate information is available to all women who have been subjected to violence, including at all stages of the justice system, and to inform everyone of women's rights and of the existing penalties for violating those rights;

19. Calls upon States, with the support of United Nations entities, to fully engage men and boys, as well as families and communities, as partners and agents of change in preventing and condemning violence against women and girls, as well as in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and to develop appropriate policies to promote the responsibility and role of men and boys in eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls;

20. Urges States to continue to develop their national strategies, translating them into concrete programmes and actions and a more systematic, comprehensive, multilateral and sustained approach, aimed at eliminating all forms of violence against women, including by achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and keeping in view the responsibility of States to exercise due diligence to prevent, protect against and investigate all acts of violence against women, by, for example:

(a) Establishing, in partnership with all relevant stakeholders and at all relevant levels, a comprehensive integrated national plan dedicated to combating violence against women and girls in all its aspects, which includes data collection and analysis and prevention and protection measures, as well as national information campaigns, using resources to eliminate gender stereotypes in the media that lead to violence against women and girls;

(b) Reviewing and, where appropriate, revising, amending or abolishing all laws, regulations, policies, practices and customs that discriminate against women or have a discriminatory impact on women, and ensuring that the provisions of multiple legal systems and alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, where they exist, comply with international human rights obligations, commitments and principles, including the principle of non-discrimination;

(c) Ending impunity by ensuring accountability and punishing the perpetrators of sexual and gender-based crimes against women and girls under national and international law, and stressing the need for the alleged perpetrators of those crimes to be held accountable by national justice systems or, where applicable, international justice;

(d) Evaluating and assessing the impact of current legislation, rules and procedures regarding violence against women with a view to ensuring access to justice, improving rates of reporting and addressing the high attrition rate from reporting to conviction, and reinforcing, where necessary, criminal law and procedure relating to all forms of violence against women, with a focus on prevention and the protection of women and easy access to redress for victims;

(e) Adopting, as appropriate, reviewing and ensuring the accelerated and effective implementation of laws and comprehensive measures that criminalize violence against women and girls and that provide for multidisciplinary and gender-sensitive preventive and protective measures, such as emergency orders and protection orders, and for the investigation, submission for prosecution and appropriate punishment of perpetrators to end impunity, and support services
that empower victims and survivors, as well as access to appropriate civil remedies and redress;

(f) Addressing and eliminating, as a matter of priority, domestic violence through adopting, strengthening and implementing legislation that prohibits such violence, prescribes punitive measures and establishes adequate legal protection against such violence;

(g) Promoting awareness among all stakeholders, in particular men and boys, of the need to combat violence against women and girls occurring in public or private life, and promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, inter alia, through regular and repeated use and funding of awareness-raising campaigns nationwide and other ways to promote prevention and protection and the transformation of discriminatory social norms and gender stereotypes, as part of an integrated prevention strategy;

(h) Encouraging the media to examine the impact of gender role stereotypes, including those perpetuated by commercial advertisements, which foster gender-based violence and inequalities;

(i) Ensuring that there is sufficient knowledge, including expertise in effective legal approaches to eliminating violence against women and girls, awareness and coordination in the legal system and, to that end, where appropriate, appointing a focal point in the legal system for cases of violence against women and girls;

(j) Also ensuring the systematic collection, analysis and dissemination of data disaggregated by sex and age to monitor all forms of violence against women and girls, including on the effectiveness of preventive and protective measures, with the involvement of national statistical offices and, where appropriate, in partnership with other actors, including law enforcement agencies, in order to effectively review and implement laws, policies, strategies and preventive and protective measures, while ensuring and maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of the victims;

(k) Establishing appropriate national mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of national measures, including national action plans, taken to eliminate violence against women, including through the use of national indicators;

(l) Providing adequate financial support and human resources for the implementation of national strategies and action plans to promote the empowerment of women and girls and gender equality, to end violence against women and girls, to prevent all forms of violence against women and girls and to provide for the redress of such violence and financial support and human resources for other related activities;

(m) Investing in the realization of the right to education, by, inter alia, eliminating illiteracy, in particular in rural and remote areas, and by closing the gender gap at all levels of education, thereby contributing to the empowerment of women and girls and to the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls;

(n) Adopting all appropriate measures, especially in the field of education, from the entry levels of the education system, to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women of all ages in order to promote the development of respectful relations and to eliminate prejudices, harmful customary practices and all other practices based on the idea of the inferiority or superiority of either of the sexes and on stereotyped roles for men and women, and raising awareness of the unacceptability of violence against women and girls at all levels, including through schools, educational programmes, teachers, parents, religious leaders, youth organizations and teaching materials sensitized on gender equality and human rights;

(o) Improving the safety and security of girls at and on the way to and from school, including by establishing a safe and violence-free environment, by improving infrastructure such as transportation, by providing separate and adequate sanitation facilities in all relevant places and improved lighting, playgrounds and safe environments, and by adopting national policies to prohibit, prevent and address violence against children, especially girls, including sexual harassment and bullying and other forms of violence, through such measures as conducting violence prevention activities in schools and communities and establishing and enforcing penalties for violence against girls;

(p) Developing gender-sensitive educational programmes at all levels and, in this regard, taking concrete measures to ensure that women and men, youth, girls and boys are portrayed in positive and non-stereotypical roles;

(q) Promoting preventive measures at an early stage with families and children exposed to or at risk of violence, such as parenting education programmes, in order to reduce the risk of possible perpetration of violence or revictimization in later childhood and adulthood;

(r) Ensuring that the appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures are in place to protect children from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse;

(s) Ensuring also that the appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures are in place to eliminate the occurrence of child, early and forced marriages and female genital mutilation and to provide information regarding the harm associated with these practices;

(t) Empowering women, in particular women living in poverty, by, inter alia, strengthening their economic autonomy and by ensuring their full participation in society and in decision-making processes, through, inter alia, social and economic policies that guarantee them full and equal access to all levels of quality education and training and to affordable and adequate public and social services, as well as equal access to financial resources and employment, and full and equal rights to own and have access to land and other property, and taking further appropriate measures to address the increasing rate of homelessness of and inadequate housing for women in order to reduce their vulnerability to violence;

(u) Treating all forms of violence against women and girls as a criminal offence, punishable by law, contributing, inter alia, to the prevention and non-recurrence of such crimes, and ensuring penalties commensurate with the severity of the crimes and sanctions in domestic legislation to punish and redress, as appropriate, the wrongs caused to women and girls who are subjected to violence;

(v) Taking effective measures, as appropriate, to prevent the requirement for victim consent from becoming an impediment to bringing perpetrators of violence against women and girls to justice, while ensuring that criminal justice processes are gender-sensitive and that ap-
proper safeguards and measures to protect women facing or subjected to violence, such as restraining and expulsion orders against the perpetrators, testimonial aids and adequate and comprehensive measures for the rehabilitation and reintegration of victims of violence into society, are in place;

(v) Encouraging the removal of all barriers to women's access to justice and ensuring that they all have access to effective legal assistance so that they can make informed decisions regarding, inter alia, legal proceedings and issues relating to family law, and also ensuring that they have access to just and effective remedies for the harm that they have suffered, including through the adoption of national legislation where necessary;

(vi) Ensuring effective cooperation and coordination among all stakeholders, including all relevant public officials and civil society, in the prevention, investigation, prosecution and punishment of all forms of violence against women and girls;

(vii) Ensuring the promotion and protection of the human rights of all women and their sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences, including through the development and enforcement of policies and legal frameworks and the strengthening of health systems that make universally accessible and available quality comprehensive sexual and reproductive health-care services, commodities, information and education, including safe and effective methods of modern contraception, emergency contraception, prevention programmes for adolescent pregnancy, maternal health care such as skilled birth attendance and emergency obstetric care, which will reduce obstetric fistula and other complications of pregnancy and delivery, safe abortion where such services are permitted by national law and prevention and treatment of reproductive tract infections, sexually transmitted infections, HIV and reproductive cancers, recognizing that human rights include the right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free from coercion, discrimination and violence;

(viii) Preventing, combating and eliminating trafficking in women and girls by criminalizing all forms of trafficking in persons, as well as by raising public awareness of the issue of trafficking in persons, particularly women and girls, including the factors that make women and girls vulnerable to trafficking, and eliminating the demand that fosters all forms of exploitation and forced labour, and encouraging, where appropriate, the media to play a role with a view to eliminating the exploitation of women and children;

(aa) Establishing comprehensive, coordinated, interdisciplinary, accessible and sustained multisectoral services, programmes and responses at all levels to provide immediate protection and support, to be made available and accessible also in rural areas, through which shelter and legal, health-care, psychological, counselling and other services are available to all women facing or subjected to violence, as well as their children, and, where integrated centres are not feasible, promoting collaboration and coordination among agencies;

(bb) Encouraging the establishment or the strengthening of, or support for, national and local helplines that provide information, counselling, support and referral services to women facing or subjected to violence;

(ac) Ensuring that the prison system and probation services provide appropriate rehabilitation programmes for perpetrators, as a preventive tool against recidivism as part of an integrated response to violence against women, and that they consider the safety of women and girls as the highest priority;

(dd) Adopting a life-cycle approach in efforts to end discrimination and violence against women and girls and ensuring that specific issues affecting older women are given greater visibility and attention;

21. Urges the international community, including the United Nations system and, as appropriate, regional and subregional organizations, to support national efforts to promote the empowerment of women and girls and gender equality in order to enhance national efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls, including, upon request, in the development and implementation of national action plans on the elimination of violence against women and girls, through, inter alia, official development assistance and other appropriate assistance, such as facilitating the sharing of guidelines, methodologies and best practices, taking into account national priorities;

22. Stresses the contribution of the ad hoc international criminal tribunals and the International Criminal Court to ending impunity by ensuring accountability and punishing perpetrators of violence against women, and urges States to consider ratifying or acceding as a matter of priority to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, which entered into force on 1 July 2002;

23. Calls upon the inter-agency Programme Advisory Committee of the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women, in consultation with the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, to continue to provide guidance on the implementation of the 2010–2015 strategy for the Trust Fund and to further enhance its effectiveness as a system-wide funding mechanism for preventing and redressing all forms of violence against women and girls and to give due consideration, inter alia, to the findings and recommendations of the external evaluation of the Trust Fund;

24. Stresses that, within the United Nations system, adequate resources should be assigned to the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and other bodies, the specialized agencies, funds and programmes responsible for the promotion of gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights of women and girls and to efforts throughout the United Nations system to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls, and calls upon the United Nations system to make the necessary support and resources available;

25. Also stresses the importance of the Secretary-General’s database on violence against women, expresses its appreciation to all the States that have provided the database with information regarding, inter alia, their national policies and legal frameworks aimed at eliminating violence against women and supporting victims of such violence, strongly encourages all States to regularly provide updated information for the database, and calls upon all relevant entities of the United Nations system to continue to support States, at their request, in the compilation and regular updating of
pertinent information and to raise awareness of the database among all relevant stakeholders, including civil society;

26. Acknowledges the work of the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, as requested by the Statistical Commission, on the development of guidelines to support the production by Member States of statistics on violence against women and girls;

27. Calls upon all United Nations bodies, entities, funds and programmes and the specialized agencies, and invites the Bretton Woods institutions, to intensify their efforts at all levels to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls and to better coordinate their work with a view to increasing effective support for national efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women;

28. Requests the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences to present an annual report to the General Assembly at its seventieth and seventy-first sessions;

29. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-first session a report containing:

(a) Information provided by the United Nations bodies, funds and programmes and the specialized agencies on their follow-up activities to implement resolution 67/144 and the present resolution, including on their assistance to States in their efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women;

(b) Information provided by States on their follow-up activities to implement the present resolution;

30. Also requests the Secretary-General to present an oral report to the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-ninth and sixtieth sessions, including information provided by the United Nations bodies, funds and programmes and the specialized agencies on recent follow-up activities to implement resolutions 65/187, 67/144 and the present resolution, including on the progress made in enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women as a system-wide United Nations mechanism and on the progress of the Secretary-General’s campaign to end violence against women, and urges United Nations bodies, entities, funds and programmes and the specialized agencies to contribute promptly to that report;

31. Decides to continue the consideration of the question at its seventy-first session under the item entitled “Advancement of women”.

**Women and armed conflict**

**Women, peace and security**

**Report of Secretary-General.** Pursuant to presidential statement S/PRST/2010/22 [YUN 2010, p. 116] and Council resolution 2122(2013) [YUN 2013, p. 1109], the Secretary-General submitted a September report [S/2014/693] on women and peace and security. The report was based on contributions from 32 UN system entities, 27 Member States and 8 regional organizations and focused on five broad action areas: prevention; participation; protection; peacebuilding, relief and recovery; and coordination and accountability for results.

Progress had been made in ensuring that peacekeeping missions provided more gender-responsive protective environments; supported the participation of women in UN-led peace processes and mediation efforts; tackled impunity for sexual and gender-based crimes; addressed linkages between irresponsible arms transfers and gender-based violence; and responded to the needs of women and girls in humanitarian and recovery settings. There was also increased awareness of the importance of seizing the political moment offered by post-conflict transitions to repeal discriminatory laws and policies and foster the economic and political empowerment of women. Nevertheless, the Secretary-General remained concerned about the continued incidence of sexual and gender-based violence and targeted attacks and threats against women and girls and those defending their rights. He called upon all parties to armed conflict to respect and uphold international law, and underlined the obligation of States to protect civilians and investigate and prosecute such crimes. He also called upon Member States to continue supporting the capacity of field missions in technical gender expertise towards ensuring the mainstreaming of gender perspectives throughout the work of field missions and the application of gender analysis to inform policy and planning processes. He encouraged Member States, the UN system and civil society to explore means of increasing the funding dedicated to the implementation of the women and peace and security agenda, and encouraged Governments and regional organizations to consider using tools such as gender markers to assess and improve performance. He noted that the convergence of major global policy events in 2015 must be maximized, including by ensuring that the 20-year review of the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women addressed the women and peace and security agenda.

**Security Council consideration.** On 28 October [S/PV.7289], the Council considered the Secretary-General’s report and a concept note [S/2014/731] submitted by Argentina on “Women and peace and security—displaced women and girls: leaders and survivors”. The adoption of the presidential statement 2014/21 (see below) was accompanied by a series of statements, including by UN-Women Executive Director, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka; Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Edmond Mulet; Special Representative of the Secretary-General of NATO for Women, Peace and Security, Mariët Schuurman; and Senior Adviser on Gender Issues of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Miroslava Beham. Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka also delivered a statement on behalf of the Secretary-General, in which she called for greater investment in measures to address the problem of discrimination against women and girls, including through broad participation in her upcoming global study on the
implementation of resolution 1325(2000) on women, peace and security [YUN 2000, p. 1113], which would include targeted recommendations to accelerate results.

SECURITY COUNCIL ACTION

On 28 October [meeting 7289], following consultations among Security Council members, the President made statement S/PRST/2014/21 on behalf of the Council:

The Security Council reaffirms its commitments to the full and effective implementation of resolutions 1325(2000), 1820(2008), 1888(2009), 1889(2009), 1960(2010), 2106(2013) and 2122(2013) and recalls all statements by its President on women and peace and security as reiterating the Council’s commitments.

The Council takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security for the purpose of implementation of resolution 1325(2000), and particularly welcomes its focus on implementation, sustaining progress and the need to translate commitments into improved outcomes.

The Council reaffirms that women’s and girls’ empowerment and gender equality are critical to efforts to maintain international peace and security, and emphasizes that persistent barriers to full implementation of resolution 1325(2000) will only be dismantled through dedicated commitment to women’s empowerment, participation and human rights, and through concerted leadership, consistent information flows and action, and support, to ensure women’s full and equal participation at all levels of decision-making.

The Council welcomes the efforts of Member States to implement resolution 1325(2000) at the national, regional and local levels, including the development of national action plans and other national, subregional and regional-level strategies and implementation frameworks, and encourages Member States to continue to pursue such implementation. The Council further stresses that United Nations entities should continue to support and supplement, as appropriate, efforts of Member States in the implementation of 1325(2000). The Council recognizes the critical contributions of civil society, including women’s organizations, to conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding and in this regard the importance of sustained consultation and dialogue between women and national and international decision makers. The Council encourages the involvement of men in promoting gender equality and ending sexual and gender-based violence.

The Council welcomes the additional steps taken to implement Council resolutions 2106(2013) and 2122(2013), and notes the importance of sustained efforts by the United Nations to improve the quality of information and analysis on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, the role of women in all areas of conflict prevention and resolution, peacemaking and peacebuilding and the gender dimensions of these areas, and to systematically include information and related recommendations on issues of relevance to women and peace and security in their reports and briefings to the Council. The Council reiterates its intention to increase its attention to women and peace and security as a cross-cutting subject in all relevant thematic areas of work on its agenda, including on threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts.

The Council recognizes that refugee and internally displaced women and girls are at heightened risk of being subject to various forms of human rights violations and abuses, including sexual and gender-based violence, and discrimination, which can occur during the various stages of the displacement cycle. The Council reaffirms the primary responsibility of Member States in the protection of their populations, including refugee and internally displaced women and girls. The Council stresses the importance of the Secretary-General and relevant United Nations agencies, inter alia, through consultation with women and women-led organizations as appropriate, supporting the development and strengthening of effective mechanisms for preventing and providing protection from violence, including in particular sexual and gender-based violence, to refugee and internally displaced women and girls.

The Council urges Member States to take measures to prevent refugee and internally displaced women and girls from being subject to violence, and to strengthen access to justice for women in such circumstances, including through the prompt investigation, prosecution and punishment of perpetrators of sexual and gender-based violence, as well as reparations for victims as appropriate. The Council stresses that the fight against impunity for the most serious crimes of international concern committed against women and girls has been strengthened through the work of the International Criminal Court, ad hoc and mixed tribunals, as well as specialized chambers in national tribunals.

The Council reiterates with grave concern that the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons fuel armed conflicts and have a disproportionate impact on violence perpetrated against women and girls, and exacerbate sexual and gender-based violence.

The Council urges all parties involved in an armed conflict to allow full and unhindered access by refugee and internally displaced women to humanitarian assistance and protection as well as basic services such as education, health, housing and productive livelihoods, including assets such as land and property, in particular for those refugee and internally displaced women and girls at increased risk of marginalization. The Council recognizes that refugee and internally displaced women and girls are at increased risk of being subject in all relevant thematic areas of work on its agenda, including on threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts.

The Council recognizes that refugee and internally displaced women and girls are at increased risk of becoming stateless as a result of discriminatory nationality laws, obstacles to registering and the lack of access to identity documents, and urges States to ensure prompt and equitable provision of all necessary identity documents to such women and girls.

The Council urges Member States, the Secretary-General and relevant United Nations agencies to ensure meaningful participation of refugee and internally
displaced women, as well as adolescent girls as appropriate, in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes for refugee and internally displaced women and girls at all stages of the displacement cycle. The Council further calls for the systematic collection, analysis and utilization of sex- and age-disaggregated data that is required to assess the specific needs and capacities of women and to meaningfully measure to what extent recovery programmes are benefiting women, men, girls and boys, by all relevant actors.

The Council expresses its deep concern that violent extremism, which can be conducive to terrorism, often results in increased displacement and is frequently targeted at women and girls, leading to serious human rights violations and abuses committed against them, including murder, abduction, hostage-taking, kidnapping, enslavement, their sale and forced marriage, human trafficking, rape, sexual slavery and other forms of sexual violence. The Council urges all Member States to protect their population, in particular women and girls, affected by violent extremism which can be conducive to terrorism, while respecting all their obligations under international law, in particular international human rights, refugee and international humanitarian law. The Council encourages Member States to engage the participation and leadership of women and women’s organizations, including refugee and internally displaced women, in developing strategies to counter violent extremism, and further to address, including by the empowerment of women, the conditions conducive to the spread of violent extremism.

The Council reiterates its intention to convene a high-level review in 2015 to assess progress at the global, regional and national levels in implementing resolution 1325(2000), renew commitments and address obstacles and constraints that have emerged in the implementation of resolution 1325(2000). The Council encourages those Member States, regional organizations as appropriate, and United Nations entities that have developed frameworks and plans to support the implementation of resolution 1325(2000) to start reviewing existing implementation plans and targets, and to accelerate progress and prepare to formulate new targets, in time for the 2015 high-level review.

The Council welcomes the commissioning by the Secretary-General, in preparation for the high-level review, of a global study on the implementation of resolution 1325(2000), highlighting good practice examples, implementation gaps and challenges, as well as emerging trends and priorities for action. The Council encourages Member States, regional and subregional organizations as appropriate, and United Nations entities to contribute to the study. The Council invites the Secretary-General within his next annual report on the implementation of resolution 1325(2000) to submit information on the results of the global study and to make this available to all States Members of the United Nations.

Sexual violence and armed conflict

In response to Security Council resolution 2106(2013) [YUN 2013, p. 1112], and to presidential statement S/PRST/2012/23 [YUN 2012, p. 1101], the Secretary-General submitted a March report [S/2014/181] on sexual violence in conflict, covering the period from January to December 2013. The report highlighted actions taken and challenges faced by States in conflict and post-conflict situations to protect women, men and children from such sexual violence; the implementation of the monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements; the deployment of women’s protection advisers; the work of the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict; the efforts of the UN system; and recommendations to strengthen efforts to combat conflict-related sexual violence. It also provided information—presented according to country and based on cases documented by the UN system—on parties to conflict credibly suspected of committing or being responsible for acts of rape and other forms of sexual violence. A list was annexed to the report. Although UN peacekeeping and political missions were the primary sources of information for the report, consultations also included UN field missions and country teams, Member States, ngos and the 13 UN entities comprising the United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict (United Nations Action) [YUN 2007, p. 1168].

Sexual violence in conflict was almost universally underreported because of the risks faced by survivors and witnesses who came forward, and by the humanitarian workers, human rights defenders, journalists and others to whom they spoke. Those risks included severe stigmatization, familial and social shunning and reprisals. In many contexts, the limited availability of services for survivors also hampered data gathering. Sexual violence was found to be closely related to broader issues of insecurity and security sector reform (ssr) and to incomplete and/or flawed disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (ddr) processes. It was therefore essential to address conflict-related sexual violence explicitly in such processes and in the context of peace agreements and ceasefires, which often established the parameters for ssr and ddr efforts. There was often a legacy from sexual violence during conflict, with acute consequences for the security of women and children in peacetime, as demonstrated by the high levels of rape and other forms of sexual violence perpetrated against women and minors in some post-conflict settings. Sexual violence was also reported as a significant factor motivating the flight of displaced persons. During flight and while displaced, civilian populations continued to be vulnerable to sexual violence, and in the context of prolonged and repeated displacement, mechanisms to prevent rape and other forms of sexual violence were often absent or limited.

Elsewhere, the report noted that pregnancy as a result of sexual violence and the plight of children born of rape required further research as a basis for response; as did the concern of sexual violence against men and boys where challenges included deep stigma, the failure of national legislation in many instances to
recognize sexual violence against men and boys as a crime, the inadequacy of services, specifically for male victims, and the lack of access to legal services.

At the same time, there had been unprecedented commitment and momentum at the global level. The Security Council in resolution 2106(2013) [YUN 2013, p. 1112] outlined for the first time a comprehensive approach and framework to prevent conflict-related sexual violence. In April 2013, the Group of Eight countries adopted the historic Declaration on Preventing Sexual Violence; and, on the sidelines of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly, more than 140 Member States endorsed the Declaration of Commitment to End Sexual Violence in Conflict.

The Secretary-General called upon all parties to conflict responsible or credibly suspected of acts of sexual violence to cease such violations and to make specific and time-bound protection commitments that included: clear orders through chains of command and codes of conduct prohibiting sexual violence; timely investigation of alleged violations; immediate identification and release from their ranks of those most vulnerable to sexual violence, especially women and children; designation of a high-level interlocutor responsible for ensuring implementation of commitments; and cooperation with the United Nations to monitor compliance. He also urged the Security Council to reinforce the key elements of the prevention framework outlined under its resolution 2106(2013).

Security Council consideration (April). On 25 April [S/PV.7160], the Council considered the Secretary-General’s report (see above) on sexual violence in conflict in the context of women and peace and security (see p. 156).

Women and children taken hostage

Report of Secretary-General. Pursuant to Commission on the Status of Women resolution 56/1 [YUN 2012, p. 1105], the Secretary-General submitted a report [E/CN.6/2014/7] on the release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts. The report was based on responses from Denmark and Togo on the status of implementation of resolution 56/1; and provided information on attention given to issues related to the topic in intergovernmental processes and bodies, including the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Human Rights Council.

There were stronger normative frameworks and mechanisms in place to address and act on issues such as enforced disappearance, missing persons, hostage-taking and the protection of women and children in armed conflict. The ratification and implementation of related international instruments and enhanced efforts to end impunity for violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, along with measures to support victims, witnesses and their families, remained essential to preventing and combating hostage-taking in armed conflicts. The limited input received from Member States, however, might be an indication of increased reporting on issues covered in resolution 56/1 in related intergovernmental processes. The Commission might therefore consider recommending that information on women and children taken hostage and the means to facilitate their release be reported to all other relevant processes and integrated into relevant reports of the Secretary-General rather than being prepared as a separate biennial report.

Commission action. On 20 March, the Commission on the Status of Women adopted a resolution [E/2014/27 (res. 58/1)] on the release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts. The resolution requested the Secretary-General and all international organizations to use their capabilities to facilitate the release of civilian women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned; and it also requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission at its sixtieth (2016) session a report on the implementation of the resolution.

Women and the economy

In a 30 September letter to the Secretary-General [A/69/396], Japan transmitted a summary of the proposals of the World Assembly for Women (Tokyo, 12–14 September), chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan. Participants, including senior UN officials, stressed the importance of promoting women’s active role in the economy and discussed global issues and women’s initiatives.

Women in power and decision-making

Women and disarmament

In response to General Assembly resolution 68/33 [YUN 2013, p. 467], the Secretary-General submitted a July report [A/69/114] which provided views of Member States and relevant entities of the UN system on ways and means of promoting the role of women in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. Responses were received from 14 Member States, the European Union and five UN entities. An addendum [A/69/114/Add.1] contained replies from Colombia and Trinidad and Tobago.

On 2 December, the General Assembly, in resolution 69/61 (see p. 614) requested the relevant UN system entities to assist States in promoting the role of women in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, including in preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. It also requested the Secretary-General to report on implementation of the resolution at its seventy-first (2016) session.
Empowerment of women in natural disasters


Major natural disasters in 2012 included Typhoon Bopha in the Philippines, Hurricane Sandy in the Caribbean and the United States, drought in the Sahel, flooding in Nigeria, Pakistan and India and earthquakes in Iran, Guatemala, Mexico and China, which collectively affected 124.5 million people causing 9,655 deaths and 32.4 million displacements. During the same period, gender equality and the empowerment of women in natural disasters was highlighted in important resolutions and outcome documents with themes on sustainable development, resilience, humanitarian action and disaster risk reduction.

Since 2012, the mandatory use of the gender marker—a tool coding, on a 0–2 scale, whether a humanitarian project was designed to ensure that women, girls, men and boys would benefit equally from it or advance gender equality in any other way—in the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) consolidated appeals process had been particularly significant in mainstreaming of gender perspectives into humanitarian action. A number of Member States, such as Germany and Sweden, had started considering the gender marker in their voluntary donor funding decisions, while others, such as Japan, Mauritius and Spain, reported the development of legislation, policies and projects that further integrated gender equality into their national humanitarian strategies.

Disasters affected women, girls, boys and men in different ways: gender inequalities increased women’s vulnerability and limited their access to the information and resources they needed to reduce the risks posed by disasters. In general, natural disasters killed more women than men, and killed women and at a younger age than men. During natural disasters, the likelihood of rape, sexual exploitation and risky behaviour greatly increased the risk of unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections and complications regarding reproductive health. As such, access to reproductive health care and education was crucial for adolescents and adults in crisis-affected settings.

The Secretary-General suggested that the Commission on the Status of Women encourage Member States to give gender-equality appropriate consideration in the development of humanitarian policies, plans and strategies; incorporate gender equality and women’s empowerment into international negotiations and consultations; ensure that adequate financial resources were available for the implementation of gender equality commitments and that those were monitored by a tracking mechanism; ensure gender balance in beneficiary selection for economic relief and recovery and/or livelihoods programming; address the lack of data disaggregated by sex; and further develop gender markers.

Commission action. On 21 March, the Commission on the Status of Women adopted a resolution [E/2014/27 (res. 58/2)] on gender equality and the empowerment of women in natural disasters, which urged Governments, UN entities and civil society to integrate a gender perspective in policies, planning and funding for disaster risk reduction, response and recovery; facilitate and increase women’s access to information and communications technology and economics for participation and leadership in environmental decisions, including during natural disasters; and ensure the full enjoyment by women and girls of all human rights in every phase of disaster risk reduction, response and recovery. It also requested all relevant UN entities to report systematically on progress towards such mainstreaming under the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women [YUN 2012, p. 1116].

Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women

Inter-Agency Network

The United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, at its thirteenth annual session (New York, 11–13 March) [IANWGE/2014/Report], focused on the intergovernmental priorities for 2014 and 2015 that deserved system-wide attention, as well as on key coordination issues related to the UN system’s work on gender equality and the empowerment of women. Concerning intergovernmental priorities, the Network was briefed on the status of the fifty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, including emerging issues and challenges towards the agreed conclusions. The discussion highlighted the importance of accelerating the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals [YUN 2000, p. 52] and identifying lesson learned from that process to inform the post-2015 development framework (see p. 960).

Concerning the framework itself, the discussion identified both areas of consensus and of contention. The former included the need for the new post-2015 agenda to be transformative, universal and rights-based; the need for stronger institutions, governance and accountability to deliver real change for women and girls; and the recognition that, to address the multiple forms of discrimination, gender equality should be integrated across all new goals and targets. Contentious issues included how the new development agenda would address human rights, in particular, sexual and reproductive health and rights; governance and the rule of law; peace and security; and climate change in
the light of the negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change towards a 2015 universal agreement.

Concerning the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, in 2015, UN-Women advised that it focus on the accelerated implementation of the Platform identifying areas of progress, challenges and opportunities. Regarding the twenty-year review of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), the United Nations Population Fund advised that it conduct a review of the implementation of the ICPD Plan of Action using quality data and analysis of the state of population and development. For the follow-up to inter-sessional activities, summaries of progress reports were shared virtually by the chairs of the relevant task forces and leading agencies on the standing agenda items, which included women and peace and security, violence against women, and Women-Watch, among others.

**Mainstreaming a gender perspective in the UN system**

In response to Economic and Social Council resolution 2013/16 [YUN 2013, p. 1117], the Secretary-General, in an April report [E/2014/63], assessed progress made in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women within the UN system since the adoption of that resolution on 24 July 2013. Emphasis was placed on accountability for system-wide work on gender equality and the empowerment of women at both the global and the country levels and on progress made in the implementation of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. Under the Action Plan, almost the entire United Nations system had reported over two consecutive years on a common set of performance indicators, resulting in substantial progress in the performance of the UN system on gender mainstreaming. Sixty-two UN entities reported under the Action Plan for 2013, compared with 55 for 2012. The second year of implementation of the Action Plan had seen progress in 14 of the 15 performance indicators.

For performance management, significant progress was made in the Secretariat, where 100 per cent of its departments, offices and economic commissions met the Action Plan requirements. Funds and programmes also improved their performance in that area, with 64 per cent meeting or exceeding requirements, compared with 50 per cent in 2012. On gender equality and empowerment of women policies, almost half of the reporting entities (29) had such policies in place. Entities exceeded requirements in only a few instances, however, demonstrating that much remained to be done for the UN system to demonstrate excellence in gender mainstreaming.

The Secretary-General suggested that the Economic and Social Council might wish to request the UN system, inter alia, to intensify the implementation of the Action Plan in order to meet its targets by 2017; to invest adequate human and financial resources to tackle identified areas of weakness, including in gender policies, capacity development, resource tracking and allocation, equal representation of women and organizational culture; to better align gender equality programming with national priorities across sectors, and encourage States and stakeholders to strengthen gender mainstreaming into all areas of development; and to substantially increase the investment in and focus on outcomes and outputs relating to gender equality and the empowerment of women in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework programmes, including by strengthening the predictability of funding, broadening the donor base and increasing the flexibility of non-core resources.

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION**

On 12 June [meeting 23], the Economic and Social Council adopted resolution 2014/2 [draft: E/2014/L.12] without vote [agenda item 10 (c)].

**Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system**

The Economic and Social Council,

Reaffirming its agreed conclusions 1997/2 of 18 July 1997 on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system, and recalling its resolutions on the subject matter, including resolutions 2011/6 of 14 July 2011, 2012/24 of 27 July 2012 and 2013/16 of 24 July 2013,

Reaffirming also the commitments to gender equality and the advancement of women made at the Millennium Summit, the 2005 World Summit, the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and other major United Nations summits, conferences and special sessions, and reaffirming further that their full, effective and accelerated implementation is integral to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

Reaffirming further the commitment made at the 2005 World Summit to actively promote the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres and to further undertake to strengthen the capabilities of the United Nations system in the area of gender,

Reaffirming that gender mainstreaming is a globally accepted strategy for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and constitutes a critical strategy in the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”, as well as in the full implementation of the
Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development.

Underlining the catalytic role played by the Commission on the Status of Women and the important roles played by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, and taking note of the agreed conclusions and decisions of the Commission related to the promotion and monitoring of gender mainstreaming within the United Nations system,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 67/226 of 21 December 2012, entitled “Quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system”, including in particular section III.D on gender equality and women’s empowerment,

Recalling also the section of General Assembly resolution 64/289 of 2 July 2010 entitled “Strengthening the institutional arrangements for support of gender equality and the empowerment of women”,

1. Welcomes the report of the Secretary-General, and appreciates that it provides a comprehensive and systemic approach to data collection and evidence-based analysis of gender mainstreaming through the United Nations system;

2. Also welcomes the recommendations contained in the report, and calls for intensified and continued efforts to mainstream a gender perspective, commensurate with gender equality goals, into all policies and programmes of the United Nations, in accordance with all relevant United Nations resolutions, in particular those of the Economic and Social Council;

3. Stresses that the Inter-agency Network on Women and Gender Equality constitutes a key forum for achieving more effective coordination, coherence and gender mainstreaming across the United Nations system and for the exchange and cross-fertilization of ideas and practical experiences on gender mainstreaming within the United Nations system, and looks forward to the continued role of the Network in accelerating the implementation of the policy and strategy for gender mainstreaming within the United Nations system;

4. Also stresses the need to leverage existing inter-agency networks, including the Inter-agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, the United Nations Evaluation Group and the Representatives of Internal Audit Services of the United Nations Organizations and Multilateral Financial Institutions, to take increased responsibility for the implementation of relevant action plan performance indicators;

5. Notes with appreciation the important and extensive work of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) for more effective and coherent gender mainstreaming across the United Nations and its role in leading, coordinating and promoting accountability of the United Nations system in its work on gender equality and the empowerment of women, as established by the General Assembly in its resolution 64/289, and recognizes its role in assisting Member States upon their request;

6. Requests the United Nations system, including its agencies, funds and programmes, within their respective mandates, to accelerate the full and effective mainstreaming of a gender perspective, commensurate with gender equality goals, in accordance with previous Economic and Social Council resolutions, in particular resolution 2008/34 of 25 July 2008, and General Assembly resolutions 64/289 and 67/226, including by:

(a) Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all its operational mechanisms, inter alia, the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks and other development frameworks;

(b) Ensuring that managers provide strong leadership and support, within the United Nations system, to advance gender mainstreaming;

(c) Increasing investment in and focus on outputs and outcomes relating to gender equality and the empowerment of women;

(d) Strengthening monitoring, evaluation and reporting so as to allow for system-wide assessment of progress in gender mainstreaming;

(e) Mobilizing and developing sufficient gender expertise for planning, implementation and gender-related resource allocation and tracking;

(f) Mainstreaming gender-responsive planning and budgeting and intensifying the use of gender marker systems, including in the humanitarian programme cycle;

(g) Strengthening capacities and using existing resources, including institutions and infrastructure, to assist in the development and application of unified training modules and tools on gender mainstreaming;

7. Also requests the United Nations system to continue and increase support to Member States, with their agreement and consent, in the implementation of national policies for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, inter alia, by providing support and capacity development to national machinery for the advancement of women and girls and related national entities;

8. Welcomes the report on the second year of implementation of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, and commends the progress made under the leadership of UN-Women in the performance of the United Nations system on gender mainstreaming;

9. Requests the continued use of reporting under the System-wide Action Plan to inform the report of the Secretary-General on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system, in order to measure the progress of the United Nations system on gender mainstreaming at the corporate level against the baseline defined in 2013;

10. Encourages the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and senior managers to continue to direct their attention to promoting gender mainstreaming in the United Nations system;

11. Recognizes that large gaps remain between policy and practice and that, while building United Nations staff capacities is very important, additional efforts, such as those recommended in the report of the Secretary-General, would enable the entire United Nations system to achieve its commitments and obligations with respect to gender mainstreaming;

12. Requests the United Nations system, including its agencies, funds and programmes, within their respective organizational mandates, to continue to work collaboratively to enhance and accelerate gender mainstreaming within the United Nations system, including by:

(a) Fully implementing the System-wide Action Plan, including ensuring 100 per cent reporting compliance by all relevant entities, in order to meet its targets;
(d) Investing in adequate human and financial resources to address shortcomings that threaten to impede progress, including in the areas of gender policies, capacity development, education and training resource tracking and allocation, the equal representation of women and organizational culture;

(e) Supporting efforts by the governing bodies of United Nations entities to devote adequate attention to gender mainstreaming in their plans and activities;

(f) Ensuring that the various accountability mechanisms of the United Nations system provide for more coherent, accurate and effective monitoring, evaluation and reporting on gender equality results and common indicators on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls;

(g) Ensuring the tracking of gender-related resource allocation and expenditure, including through the promotion of the use of gender markers that apply similar standards and principles to allow for comparability and aggregation;

(h) Continuing to better align gender equality programming with national priorities across sectors, as requested by the Member State concerned, with the aim of mainstreaming gender perspectives into all legislation, policies and programmes, and supporting national and regional preparations for the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;

(i) Strengthening the coordination of gender-responsive operational activities among entities of the United Nations system through existing coordination mechanisms at the country level and in partnership, where appropriate, with national stakeholders;

(j) Instituting greater accountability in evaluations conducted by United Nations country teams by including gender perspectives in such evaluations;

(k) Empowering resident coordinators and humanitarian coordinators to promote gender mainstreaming and to expand and strengthen the use by country teams of the United Nations Development Group performance indicators on gender equality (gender scorecard), including in the context of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, as a planning, accountability, monitoring, evaluation and reporting tool for assessing the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming;

(l) Substantially increasing the investment in and focus on outcomes and outputs relating to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework programmes, including by strengthening the predictability of the funding, broadening the donor base and increasing the flexibility of non-core resources;

(m) Acquiring appropriate technical expertise for gender mainstreaming into programme planning and implementation to ensure that gender dimensions are systematically addressed, and in this regard drawing on the gender equality expertise available in the United Nations system, including at UN-Women and from gender advisers, to assist in the preparation of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks and other relevant programming frameworks;

(n) Collecting, analysing, disseminating and using accurate, reliable, comparable and relevant data, disaggregated by, inter alia, sex, age and disability, in a regular and systematic manner, in order to guide country programming, to support the preparation of organization-wide and country-level documents, such as the strategic, programmatic and results-based frameworks and evaluations, and to continue to promote and refine their tools for measuring progress and impact;

13. **Requests** the Secretary-General to submit to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2015 a report on the implementation of the present resolution, including on the promotion of accountability at both the national and the global levels and on progress made in the implementation of the System-wide Action Plan.

### Human rights of women

#### Palestinian women

In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2013/17 [YUN 2013, p. 419], a report of the Secretary-General [E/CN.6/2014/6] reviewed the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women from October 2012 to September 2013 (see p. 560).

On 12 June, the Economic and Social Council took action on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women in **resolution 2014/1** (see p. 562).

#### Trafficking in women and girls

**Report of Secretary-General.** Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 67/145 [YUN 2012, p. 1110], the Secretary-General submitted an August report [A/69/224] on trafficking in women and girls, which provided information on measures taken by 28 Member States and 10 UN entities to combat the practice since his last report [YUN 2012, p. 1109].

United Nations bodies continued to adopt resolutions and recommendations to address human trafficking, including trafficking in women and girls. At its sixty-eighth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 68/192 [YUN 2013, p. 1249] on improving coordination of efforts against trafficking in persons. At the same session, a high-level meeting was held on the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons (13–14 May 2013). Other UN bodies also adopted legally binding agreements, resolutions and conclusions relating to trafficking. On 14 June, for example, the annual International Labour Conference adopted a legally binding protocol to the International Labour Organization’s Convention No. 29, concerning forced or compulsory labour.

During the reporting period, actions were taken at all levels to prevent and address trafficking in persons, many of which were focused on trafficking in women and children. The majority of States, however, did not distinguish between responses relating to girls and those relating more broadly to children. Adherence to relevant international instruments—such as the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its two supplementing Protocols, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child and/
or the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women—increased, and the majority of reporting States carried out legal reforms to varying degrees. While States were making some efforts to ensure that existing and new laws were enforced and that members of the police, prosecutors and the judiciary were adequately trained, prosecution rates continued to be low. Few Member States reported on improving the prevention of trafficking in women and girls in humanitarian situations, conflict environment and other emergencies. Many States continued to find it difficult to identify trafficking victims and few of them reported collaboration with the private sector.

The Secretary-General recommended that all States ensure that the responses to trafficking took into account the needs of women and girls, especially in addressing sexual exploitation and domestic servitude; that laws were developed in accordance with the standards set by the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and associated Protocols and that sentences were in line with those for other serious crimes. Efforts must continue to ensure the gender-sensitive enforcement of anti-trafficking legislation and to hold perpetrators accountable for their crimes; and to ensure that national action plans were adequately funded and evaluated. States should take more action to address the factors that made women and girls vulnerable to trafficking, particularly in relation to reducing poverty, unemployment and providing access to education. Furthermore, States should provide residency to victims, as well as long-term support to enable victims to begin new lives.

**Reports of Special Rapporteur.** The Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, submitted to the Human Rights Council her thematic report [A/HRC/26/37] on the first decade of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur, covering the period from 1 August 2013 to 28 February 2014. Additional reports by the Special Rapporteur covered topics such as partnerships with national rapporteurs on trafficking in persons, as well as official visits to different countries [A/HRC/26/37/Add.1–11]. In August, the Secretary-General transmitted to the General Assembly another report [A/69/269] of the Special Rapporteur which, besides the activities presented in her report to the Human Rights Council, summarized her activities from 1 March to 31 July 2014 (see p. 873).

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION**

On 18 December [meeting 73], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/69/481], adopted resolution 69/149 without vote [agenda item 27 (a)].

**Trafficking in women and girls**

*The General Assembly,*

*Reiterating its strong condemnation of trafficking in persons, especially women and children, which constitutes a serious threat to human dignity, human rights and development,*


*Recognizing the crucial importance of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, which entered into force on 25 December 2003 and which provided, for the first time, an internationally agreed definition of the crime of trafficking in persons aimed at the prevention of trafficking in persons, the protection of victims and the prosecution of the perpetrators,*

*Welcoming the outcome of the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, held in Vienna from 6 to 10 October 2014, in which the Conference took a further step towards identifying an appropriate mechanism or mechanisms to review the implementation of the Convention and the Protocols thereto,*

*Reaffirming the provisions pertaining to trafficking in women and girls contained in the outcome documents of relevant international conferences and summits, in particular the strategic objective on the issue of trafficking contained in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women,*

*Reaffirming also the commitment made by world leaders at the Millennium Summit, the 2005 World Summit and the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals to devise, enforce and strengthen effective measures to combat and eliminate all forms of trafficking in persons in order to counter the demand for trafficked victims and to protect the victims,*

*Welcoming in particular the efforts of States, United Nations bodies and agencies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to address the problem of trafficking in persons, especially women and children, including the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 64/293 of 30 July 2010,*

*Taking note of the adoption by the International Labour Conference, at its 103rd session, on 11 June 2014, of the Protocol to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) and Recommendation No. 203 on supplementary measures for the effective suppression of forced labour, of the International Labour Organization, which specify that measures to be taken for the prevention of forced or
compulsory labour shall include specific actions against trafficking in persons for the purposes of forced or compulsory labour,

Welcoming, in the agreed conclusions adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-eighth Session, the commitment of Governments to take appropriate measures to raise public awareness of the issue of trafficking in persons, particularly women and girls, including the factors that make women and girls vulnerable to trafficking, to discourage, with a view to eliminating, the demand that fosters all forms of exploitation, including sexual exploitation and forced labour, and to review and adopt the laws, regulations and penalties necessary to deal with this issue and publicize them to emphasize that trafficking is a serious crime,

Welcoming also the observance, on 30 July 2014, of the first World Day against Trafficking in Persons, in the context of the need for raising awareness of the situation of victims of human trafficking and for the promotion and protection of their rights,

Noting with appreciation the steps taken, including the reports of human rights treaty bodies and the Special Rapporteurs of the Human Rights Council on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, on violence against women, its causes and consequences, on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, and on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, and by United Nations agencies and other concerned intergovernmental and governmental organizations, within their existing mandates, as well as civil society, to address the serious crime of trafficking in persons, and encouraging them to continue doing so and to share their knowledge and best practices as widely as possible,

Noting the renewal by the Human Rights Council, at its twenty-sixth session, of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and the fact that part of her task is to integrate a gender- and age-specific perspective throughout the work of her mandate, inter alia, through the identification of gender- and age-specific vulnerabilities in relation to the issue of trafficking in persons,

Acknowledging the inclusion of gender-related crimes in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, which entered into force on 1 July 2002,

Bearing in mind the obligations of States to exercise due diligence to prevent trafficking in persons, to investigate and punish perpetrators of trafficking in persons and to protect and empower victims, and that not doing so violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the victims,

Seriously concerned that an increasing number of women and girls are being trafficked, including to developed countries, as well as within and between regions and States, and that men and boys are also victims of trafficking, including for sexual exploitation,

Recognizing that certain efforts against trafficking in persons lack the gender and age sensitivity needed to effectively address the situation of women and girls, who are particularly vulnerable to trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation, forced labour, services and other forms of exploitation, thus highlighting the need to incorporate a gender- and age-sensitive approach into all anti-trafficking efforts,

...
information on or awareness and recognition of their human rights and by the stigmatization often associated with trafficking, as well as by the obstacles they meet in gaining access to accurate information and recourse mechanisms in cases of the violation of their rights, and that special measures are required for their protection and to increase their awareness.

**Encouraging** the Commission on the Status of Women to consider the issue of trafficking in women and girls at its fifty-ninth session, within the framework of the review of progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, as well as opportunities for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women in the post-2015 development agenda,

**Welcoming** the decision by the General Assembly, in its resolution 68/309 of 10 September 2014, that the proposal of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals contained in its report shall be the main basis for integrating sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda, while recognizing that other inputs will also be considered, in the intergovernmental negotiation process at the sixty-ninth session of the Assembly, and taking note with appreciation of the reference to ensuring gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls contained in the proposal of the Open Working Group,

**Reaffirming** the importance of bilateral, subregional, regional and international cooperation mechanisms and initiatives, including information exchanges on best practices, of Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to address the problem of trafficking in persons, especially women and children,

**Taking note** of the second consultative meeting on strengthening partnerships with national rapporteurs on trafficking in persons and equivalent mechanisms, held in Bangkok in May 2014, and the establishment of an informal network of such mechanisms from all over the world in order to address trafficking in persons in a consistent manner, exchange information and best practices and build on different national experiences,

**Reaffirming** that global efforts, including international cooperation and technical assistance programmes, to eradicate trafficking in persons, especially women and children, demand the strong political commitment, coordinated and coherent efforts and active cooperation of all Governments of countries of origin, transit and destination,

**Recognizing** that policies and programmes for prevention, protection, rehabilitation, repatriation and reintegration should be developed through a gender- and age-sensitive, comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach, with concern for the security of the victims and respect for the full enjoyment of their human rights and with the involvement of all actors in countries of origin, transit and destination,

**Convinced** of the need to protect and assist all victims of trafficking, with full respect for the human rights and dignity of the victims,

1. **Takes note with appreciation** of the report of the Secretary-General, which provides information on measures by States and activities within the United Nations system to tackle trafficking in women and girls;

2. **Also takes note with appreciation** of the information submitted by Member States and United Nations entities on measures and activities taken to combat trafficking in women and girls, and urges Member States and United Nations entities that have not done so to submit the requested information for inclusion in the report of the Secretary-General;

3. **Takes note** of the reports of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on trafficking in persons, especially women and children;

4. **URGES** Member States that have not yet done so to consider ratifying or acceding to, as a matter of priority, the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, taking into consideration the central role of those instruments in the fight against trafficking in persons, and urges States parties to those instruments to implement them fully and effectively;

5. **URGES** Member States to consider signing and ratifying and States parties to implement the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocol thereto, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocols thereto, and the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, as well as the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) and the Protocol thereto, the Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81), the Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97), the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111), the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), the Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975 (No. 143), the Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181), the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), and the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189), of the International Labour Organization;

6. **URGES** Member States, the United Nations and other international, regional and subregional organizations, as well as civil society, including non-governmental organizations, the private sector and the media, to fully and effectively implement the relevant provisions of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons and the activities outlined therein;

7. **WELCOMES** the efforts of Governments, United Nations bodies and agencies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to address the particular problem of trafficking in women and girls, and encourages them to further enhance their efforts and cooperation, including by sharing their knowledge, technical expertise and best practices as widely as possible;

8. **Also welcomes** the convening of the Regional Ministerial Conference on Human Trafficking and Smuggling in the Horn of Africa, in Khartoum, from 13 to 16 October 2014, organized by the African Union in collaboration with the Government of the Sudan, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration, in this regard takes note with appreciation of the outcome document of the Conference, known as the Khartoum Declaration, and calls for its implementation, including through technical cooperation and capacity-building by the United Nations and the international community;

9. **Encourages** the United Nations system to mainstream, as appropriate, the issue of trafficking in persons, especially women and girls, into its broader policies and programmes aimed at addressing economic and social development, human rights, the rule of law, good gover-
nance, education, health and natural disaster and post-conflict reconstruction;

10. Welcomes the focus given by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) to ending violence against women and to increasing women's access to economic opportunities, as well as its work on building effective partnerships for the empowerment of women, which will contribute to the efforts to combat trafficking in persons;

11. Calls upon Governments to intensify their efforts to address, with a view to eliminating, the demand that fosters the trafficking of women and girls for all forms of exploitation and in this regard to put in place or to enhance preventive measures, including legislative and punitive measures to deter exploiters of trafficked persons, as well as ensure their accountability;

12. Acknowledges the drafting of the basic principles on the right to an effective remedy for victims of trafficking in persons;

13. Calls upon Governments to strengthen measures aimed at advancing gender equality and empowering women and girls by, inter alia, enhancing their participation and leadership in society, including through education, economic empowerment and promoting an increase in the number of women assuming decision-making roles in both the public and private sectors, and to take further appropriate measures to address the increasing rate of homelessness of and inadequate housing for women in order to reduce their vulnerability to being trafficked;

14. Also calls upon Governments to take appropriate measures to address the factors that increase vulnerability to being trafficked, including poverty and gender inequality, as well as other factors that encourage the particular problem of trafficking in women and girls for exploitation in prostitution and other forms of commercialized sex, forced marriage, forced labour and organ removal, in order to prevent and eliminate such trafficking, including by strengthening existing legislation, with a view to providing better protection of the rights of women and girls and to punishing perpetrators, including public officials engaging in or facilitating human trafficking, through, as appropriate, criminal and civil measures;

15. Calls upon Governments, the international community and all other organizations and entities that deal with conflict, post-conflict, disaster and other emergency situations to address the heightened vulnerability of women and girls to trafficking and exploitation and associated gender-based violence and to include the prevention of the trafficking of affected women and girls in all such national, regional and international initiatives;

16. Urges Governments to devise, enforce and strengthen effective gender- and age-sensitive measures to combat and eliminate all forms of trafficking in women and girls, including for sexual and economic exploitation, as part of a comprehensive anti-trafficking strategy that integrates a human rights perspective, and to draw up, as appropriate, national action plans in this regard;

17. Also urges Governments to ensure that the prevention of and responses to trafficking in persons continue to take into account the specific needs of women and girls and their participation in and contribution to all phases of preventing and responding to trafficking, especially in addressing specific forms of exploitation, such as sexual exploitation;

18. Further urges Governments, in cooperation with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, to support and allocate resources to strengthen preventive action, in particular education for women and men, as well as for girls and boys, on gender equality, self-respect and mutual respect, and campaigns, carried out in collaboration with civil society, to increase public awareness of the issue at the national and grass-roots levels, including anti-trafficking awareness-raising campaigns targeted at groups that are at increased risk of becoming victims of trafficking, as well as at those who may fuel the demand for the exploitation of trafficked persons and/or their labour;

19. Reiterates the importance of continued coordination among, inter alia, the Special Rapporteurs of the Human Rights Council on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and on contemporary forms of slavery, including its causes and consequences, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication in their activities in fulfilment of their mandates;

20. Urges Governments to strengthen measures to eliminate sex tourism demand, especially for children, through all possible preventive actions, including legislative measures and other relevant policies and programmes;

21. Encourages the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the World Tourism Organization and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to promote their global campaign urging travellers to support the fight against trafficking in persons, especially women and girls;

22. Urges Governments to develop age-appropriate educational and training programmes and policies aimed at preventing sex tourism and trafficking, giving special emphasis to the protection of young women and children;

23. Encourages Member States to establish or strengthen national programmes and to engage in bilateral, subregional, regional and international cooperation, including by forging regional initiatives or plans of action, to address the problem of trafficking in persons through, inter alia, the enhancement of information-sharing, data disaggregated by sex and age, specific data collection and other technical capacities and mutual legal assistance, as well as the combating of corruption and laundering of proceeds derived from trafficking, including for purposes of commercial sexual exploitation, and to ensure, as appropriate, that such agreements and initiatives are particularly responsive to the problem of trafficking as it affects women and girls;

24. Calls upon all Governments to criminalize all forms of trafficking in persons, recognizing its increasing occurrence for purposes of sexual exploitation, commercial sexual exploitation and abuse, sex tourism and forced labour, and to bring to justice and punish the offenders and intermediaries involved, including public officials involved with trafficking in persons, whether local or foreign, through the competent national authorities, either in the country of origin of the offender or in the country in which the abuse occurs, in accordance with the due process of law, as well as to penalize persons in authority found guilty of sexually assaulting victims of trafficking in their custody;

25. Urges Governments, in accordance with their respective legal systems, to take all appropriate measures, including through policies and legislation, to ensure that victims of trafficking are protected from prosecution or
punishment for acts those victims have been compelled to commit as a direct consequence of having been trafficked and that the victims do not suffer from revictimization as a result of actions taken by Government authorities, and encourages Governments to prevent, within their legal framework and in accordance with national policies, victims of trafficking in persons from being prosecuted or punished as a direct consequence of their illegal entry or residence;

26. Invites Governments to consider establishing or strengthening a national mechanism, with the participation of civil society, as appropriate, including non-governmental organizations, to ensure a holistic and coordinated approach to anti-trafficking policies and measures, to encourage the exchange of information and to report on data, root causes, factors and trends in trafficking in persons, especially women and girls, and to include data on victims of trafficking disaggregated by sex and age;

27. Invites the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, to continue cooperating with international, regional and national mechanisms to combat trafficking in persons, in consultation with Governments, relevant treaty bodies, special procedures, the specialized agencies, intergovernmental organizations, civil society, including non-governmental organizations, national human rights institutions and other sources, including victims of trafficking or their representatives, as appropriate;

28. Encourages Governments and relevant United Nations bodies, from within existing resources, to take appropriate measures to raise public awareness of the issue of trafficking in persons, particularly women and girls, including the factors that make women and girls vulnerable to trafficking, to discourage, with a view to eliminating, the demand that fosters all forms of exploitation, including sexual exploitation and forced labour, to publicize the laws, regulations and penalties relating to this issue and to emphasize that trafficking is a serious crime;

29. Calls upon concerned Governments to allocate resources, as appropriate, to provide access to appropriate programmes for the physical, psychological and social recovery of victims of trafficking, including sexual and reproductive health-care services that include affordable treatment, care and support services for HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections, free of stigma and discrimination, as well as comprehensive information and voluntary counselling, and to take measures to cooperate with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to provide for the social, medical and psychological care of the victims;

30. Encourages Governments, in cooperation with intergovernmental and civil society organizations, to undertake or strengthen campaigns aimed at clarifying opportunities, limitations, rights and responsibilities with respect to migration, as well as information on the risks of irregular migration and the ways and means used by traffickers, to enable women to make informed decisions and to prevent them from becoming victims of trafficking;

31. Also encourages Governments to review and strengthen, as appropriate, the enforcement of relevant labour and other laws within their territories or jurisdictions that are aimed at, or have the effect of, requiring business enterprises, including recruitment agencies, to prevent and combat human trafficking in supply chains, and to periodically assess the adequacy of such laws and address any gaps;

32. Invites the business sector to consider the adoption of ethical codes of conduct to ensure decent work and to prevent any form of exploitative practices that foster trafficking;

33. Encourages Governments to intensify collaboration with non-governmental organizations to develop and implement gender- and age-sensitive programmes for effective counselling, training and reintegration into society of victims of trafficking and programmes that provide shelter and helplines to victims or potential victims;

34. Urges Governments to provide or strengthen training for, and to raise awareness among, law enforcement, judicial, immigration and other relevant officials on the prevention and combating of trafficking in persons, including the sexual exploitation of women and girls, and in this regard calls upon Governments to ensure that the treatment of victims of trafficking, especially by law enforcement officials, immigration officers, consular officials, social workers and other first response officials, is conducted with full respect for the human rights of those victims and with gender and age sensitivity and observes the principles of non-discrimination, including the prohibition of racial discrimination;

35. Invites Member States to provide training for law enforcement and border control officials, as well as medical personnel, in identifying potential cases of trafficking in persons for the purpose of organ removal;

36. Invites Governments to take steps to ensure that criminal justice procedures and witness protection programmes are sensitive to the particular situation of trafficked women and girls, and that they are supported and assisted, as appropriate, in making complaints to the police or other authorities, without fear, and are available, when required, by the criminal justice system, and to ensure that during this time they have access to gender- and age-sensitive protection and, as appropriate, social, medical, financial and legal assistance, including the possibility of obtaining compensation for damages suffered;

37. Also invites Governments to intensify efforts aimed at the speedy disposition of cases of trafficking in persons and, in cooperation with, inter alia, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, to devise, enforce and strengthen systems and mechanisms for combating trafficking in persons;

38. Further invites Governments to encourage media providers, including Internet service providers, to adopt or strengthen self-regulatory measures to promote the responsible use of media, particularly the Internet, with a view to eliminating the exploitation of women and children, in particular girls, which could foster trafficking;

39. Invites the business sector, in particular the tourism, travel and telecommunications industries, relevant recruitment agencies and mass media organizations, to cooperate with Governments in eliminating trafficking in women and children, in particular girls, including through the dissemination by the media of information regarding the dangers of trafficking, the means used by traffickers, the rights of trafficked persons and the services available to victims of trafficking;

40. Stresses the need for the systematic collection of data disaggregated by sex and age and comprehensive studies at both the national and the international levels and
the development of common methodologies and internationally defined indicators to make it possible to develop relevant and comparable figures, and encourages Governments to enhance information-sharing and data-collection capacity as a way of promoting cooperation to combat the trafficking problem;

41. Invites Governments, United Nations bodies, agencies and special mechanisms, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and the private sector to undertake collaborative and joint research and studies on trafficking in women and girls that can serve as a basis for policy formulation or change;

42. Invites Governments, with the support of the United Nations, when necessary, and other intergovernmental organizations, taking into account best practices, to formulate training manuals and other informational materials and to provide training for law enforcement, judicial and other relevant officials and medical and support personnel, with a view to sensitizing them to the special needs of women and girl victims;

43. Encourages Governments and relevant intergovernmental bodies and international organizations to ensure that military, peacekeeping and humanitarian personnel deployed in conflict, post-conflict and other emergency situations are provided with training on conduct that does not promote, facilitate or exploit trafficking in women and girls, including for sexual exploitation, and to raise the awareness of such personnel about the potential risks to victims of conflict and other emergency situations, including natural disasters, of being trafficked;

44. Invites States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the International Covenants on Human Rights to include methodology and statistics to obtain comparable data;

45. Invites States to continue to contribute to the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery and to the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children;

46. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-first session a report that compiles information on successful interventions and strategies, as well as the gaps, in addressing the gender dimensions of the problem of trafficking in persons and provides recommendations on the strengthening of human rights-based, gender- and age-sensitive approaches within comprehensive and balanced efforts to address trafficking in persons.

The girl child

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/146 [YUN 2013, p. 1120], the Secretary-General in a July note [A/69/165] informed the Assembly that the summary report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (ohchr) on the panel discussion on preventing and eliminating child, early and forced marriage was contained in document A/HRC/27/34 (see p. 876).

On 18 December, the General Assembly, in resolution 69/156 (see p. 877), requested the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report to the Assembly, before the end of its seventieth session, on progress towards ending child, early and forced marriage worldwide since the issuance of the ohchr report of 2 April [A/HRC/26/22 & Corr.1].

UN machinery

Convention on elimination of discrimination against women

As at 31 December, 188 States were parties to the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 34/180 [YUN 1979, p. 895]. The State of Palestine acceded on 2 April.

As at 31 December, the Optional Protocol to the Convention, which was adopted by the Assembly in resolution 54/4 [YUN 1999, p. 1100] and entered into force in 2000 [YUN 2000, p. 1123], had 105 States parties. Tajikistan ratified the Optional Protocol on 22 July.

CEDAW

In 2014, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (cedaw), established in 1982 [YUN 1982, p. 1149] to monitor compliance with the 1979 Convention, held three regular sessions [A/69/38 & A/70/38].

Fifty-seventh session. At its fifty-seventh session (Geneva, 10–28 February) [A/69/38], cedaw adopted concluding observations on the reports of Bahrain, Cameroon, Finland, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Qatar and Sierra Leone; considered the follow-up reports from Bangladesh, Italy, Lesotho and Sri Lanka; and considered additional information sent by Myanmar. CEDAW also considered a report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (unesco) [CEDAW/C/57/2] and a report of the International Labour Organization (ilo) [CEDAW/C/57/3]. The Committee adopted a statement on the post-2015 development agenda and the elimination of discrimination against women [A/69/38 (dec. 57/I)], as well as a statement on sexual and reproductive health rights [dec. 57/II]; decided to entrust the working group on working methods with the task of reviewing the rules of procedure of the Committee [dec. 57/III]; confirmed the members of the pre-session working group for the fifty-ninth session [dec. 57/IV]; decided to mandate the ohchr Petitions and Inquiries Section to service the Committee’s work under article 8 of the Optional Protocol [dec. 57/V]; designated the Chair and Vice-Chair of the task force on inquir-
ies and decided to expand the task force to include one additional member, in addition to the existing nine [dec. 57/VII]; decided to establish a task force on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations [dec. 57/VIII]; and expanded the working group on gender-related dimensions of refugee status, asylum and statelessness to include one more member, in addition to the existing seven [dec. 57/VIII].

**Fifty-eighth session.** At its fifty-eighth session (Geneva, 30 June–18 July) [A/70/38], CEDAW prepared concluding observations on the reports of the Central African Republic, Georgia, India, Lithuania, Mauritania, Peru, Swaziland and the Syrian Arab Republic; considered the follow-up reports from Belarus, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Liechtenstein, Mauritius, Paraguay, the Republic of Korea and Singapore; and considered additional information received from the Netherlands and Turkey. CEDAW also considered a note by the secretariat on ways of expediting the Committee’s work [CEDAW/C/58/2]; a report of UNESCO [CEDAW/C/58/3] and a report of ILO [CEDAW/C/58/4]. The Committee adopted a statement on the situation of women in Gaza [A/70/38 (dec. 58/I)]; decided to offer, on a pilot basis and under certain conditions, a simplified reporting procedure to those States parties that so wished for the submission of their periodic reports as from 1 January 2015 [dec. 58/II]; adopted its findings and recommendations in relation to inquiry No. 2011/1 and decided to transmit them to the State party concerned—Canada [dec. 58/III]; decided to discuss, at an informal meeting during its fifty-ninth session, the modalities of its consideration of inquiries under article 8 of the Optional Protocol, including adequate time and resources and the issue of confidentiality [dec. 58/IV]; decided to appoint three members as focal points for the cooperation of the Committee with the Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations [dec. 58/V]; and confirmed five members of the pre-sessional working group for the sixtieth session [dec. 58/VI].


**Fifty-ninth session.** At its fifty-ninth session (Geneva, 20 October–7 November) [A/70/38], CEDAW adopted concluding observations on the reports of Belgium, Brunei Darussalam, China, Ghana, Guinea, Poland, Solomon Islands and Venezuela; and considered the follow-up reports of Brazil, Costa Rica, Kenya, Montenegro and Norway. CEDAW also considered a report of ILO [CEDAW/C/59/2] and a report of UNESCO [CEDAW/C/59/3]. The Committee adopted joint general recommendation No. 31 of CEDAW/general comment No. 18 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on harmful practices [A/70/38 (dec. 59/I)], as well as general recommendation No. 32 on the refugee status, asylum, nationality and statelessness of women [dec. 59/II]; decided to systematically apply the guidelines on the independence of members of the human rights treaty bodies (the Addis Ababa guidelines) [YUN 2012, p. 619] from 1 January 2015 [dec. 59/III]; decided to entrust its pre-sessional working group with the preparation of draft lists of issues prior to reporting under the simplified reporting procedure [dec. 58/II] and to limit the number of questions in those lists to a maximum of 25 [dec. 59/IV]; decided to amend rule 24 of its rules of procedure and have English, French and Spanish as the Committee’s official working languages and to have, from 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2016, Arabic at its fourth official language [dec. 59/V]; decided to establish, on a pilot basis, a Working Group on Inquiries under the Optional Protocol, consisting of no more than five Committee members and reflecting equitable geographical representation [dec. 59/VI]; decided to publish on the OHCHR website a full report of an inquiry setting out the Committee’s findings, comments and recommendations upon the completion of all proceedings related to the conduct of the inquiry as well as the expiry of the time limit pursuant to article 8, paragraph 4, of the Optional Protocol [dec. 59/VII]; decided that the Working Group on Communications under the Optional Protocol should meet immediately prior to the regular sessions of the Committee and that the thirty-first session of the Working Group would be held from 10 to 13 February 2015 in Geneva [dec. 59/VIII]; appointed the rapporteur on follow-up and the alternate rapporteur, both for a period of two years, from 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2016 [dec. 59/IX]; confirmed the four members of the pre-sessional working group for the sixty-first session [dec. 59/X]; and entrusted a member with exploring ways for mobilizing extrabudgetary financial resources for the Committee [dec. 59/XI].

**Commission on the Status of Women**

At its fifty-eighth session (New York, 10–21 March) [E/2014/27], the Commission on the Status of Women, in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2009/15 [YUN 2009, p. 1155], considered as its priority theme “Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls”. It also considered as its review theme “Access and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women’s equal access to full employment and decent work”. It further considered an emerging issue, “Women’s access to productive resources”. As part of its consideration of those themes, the Commission held one high-level round table and five panel discussions.

The Commission adopted agreed conclusions on the priority theme and recommended to the
Economic and Social Council the adoption of a draft resolution on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women. It further brought to the attention of the Council three resolutions it had adopted on the following topics: release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts [E/2014/27 (res. 58/1)]; gender equality and the empowerment of women in natural disasters [res. 58/2]; and women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS [res. 58/3].

The Commission also brought to the Council’s attention a decision [dec. 58/101] by which it took note of the following documents: the report of the Executive Director of UN-Women on the normative aspects of the work of that entity [E/CN.6/2014/2]; the reports of the Secretary-General on the challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for women and girls [E/CN.6/2014/3], on the progress in mainstreaming a gender perspective in national policies and programmes [E/CN.6/2014/4], on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women [E/CN.6/2014/6], on the release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts [E/2014/27 (res. 58/7)], on actions to strengthen linkages between gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and the elimination of preventable maternal mortality and morbidity [E/2014/11], on women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS [E/2014/12], on gender equality and the empowerment of women in natural disasters [E/CN.6/2014/13] and on ways to enhance the impact of the Commission on the Status of Women [E/CN.6/2014/14]; a note by the Secretariat containing a discussion guide for the high-level round table on the challenges and achievements in the implementation of the MDGs for women and girls [E/CN.6/2014/5], and notes by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of UN-Women on the activities of the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women [A/HRC/26/17-E/CN.6/2014/8] and on the proposed strategic framework for the period 2016–2017: Programme 14, Gender equality and empowerment of women [E/CN.6/2014/CRP.3].

By decision 2014/216 of 12 June, the Economic and Social Council took note of the Commission’s report on its fifty-eighth session and approved the provisional agenda and documentation for its fifty-ninth (2015) session.

Communication. In a 19 December letter [E/CN.6/2015/7] to the Commission Chairperson, the Economic and Social Council President requested the Commission’s substantive contributions to the themes for the 2015 session of the Council and informed the Commission of the theme for the 2016 session of the Council. The Council President also informed the Commission of the 2014 session of the Council and its adopted mandates that were relevant to the Commission.

Other reports. Documents issued during the year, to be addressed during the Commission’s 2015 session, included a report of the UN-Women Executive Director [E/CN.6/2015/2]; reports of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly [E/CN.6/2015/3] and on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women [E/CN.6/2015/5]; and notes by the Secretariat on a discussion guide for the ministerial round tables to be held under the 2015 overall theme [E/CN.6/2015/4] and on the results of the fifty-eighth and fifty-ninth sessions of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women [E/CN.6/2015/9].

Future organization and working methods

In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2013/18 [YUN 2013, p. 1129], the Secretary-General submitted a report [E/CN.6/2014/14] reviewing the functioning of the Commission’s methods of work; and made recommendations for consideration by the Commission with a view to further enhancing the impact of its work.

The Commission’s methods of work provided for: the consideration of one priority theme and one review theme per session; discussion of emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting the situation of women or equality between women and men that required urgent attention; and participation of stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations. The working methods sought to contribute to advancing and accelerating the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly at all levels.

The multi-year thematic approach, which encompassed one priority theme and one review theme per session, had enabled the Commission to undertake a systematic follow-up to the Beijing Platform for Action and to take up themes and issues that required further consideration in the light of new developments. The approach also strengthened the Commission’s capacity to undertake a careful analysis of the selected themes, with sufficient lead time to facilitate substantive preparations. The Secretary-General recommended that the Commission continue to use a multi-year thematic approach to its work.

With regard to the priority theme, the Secretary-General recommended that the Commission hold a general discussion, with a focus on the priority theme, to consolidate its role and its strategic value as the primary global forum for the promotion of gender equality and women’s empowerment; maintain and further enhance the interactive nature of the consideration of
its priority theme, with the participation of high-level representatives as well as experts; and consider possible options for the outcome on its priority theme.

With regard to the format of the review theme, the Secretary-General recommended that the Commission retain the interactive nature of the review, and expand it through national voluntary presentations, the submission of written assessments of progress by Member States, the preparation of analysis and joint panel discussions of the Commission and the Executive Board of UN-Women in order to further enhance follow-up and implementation of its policy guidance. On the matter of the emerging issue theme, the Secretary-General recommended that the Commission retain an item on emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting the situation of women or equality between women and men that required urgent consideration, to be selected intersessionally by the Commission’s bureau in consultation with Member States. On the participation of stakeholders and non-governmental organizations, the Secretary-General recommended that the Commission consider expanding opportunities for non-governmental organizations to contribute through allocating more time to their interventions during the general discussion, greater priority to their interventions during panel discussions and granting a limited number of regionally diverse representatives access to negotiations. On the reform of the Economic and Social Council and implications for the work of the Commission, the Secretary-General recommended that the Commission align its thematic priorities with those of the Council in order to provide effective and targeted inputs from a gender perspective.

Communications on the status of women

At a closed meeting on 19 March [E/2014/27], the Commission considered the report of the Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women [E/CN.6/2014/CRP.2] and a note by the Secretariat transmitting the list of confidential communications concerning the status of women. The Working Group considered 67 confidential communications received by UN-Women and noted that there were 33 replies from 18 Governments.

The communications most frequently concerned sexual violence against women and girls and forced prostitution; other forms of violence, including domestic violence and female genital mutilation; abuse of power by law enforcement and military forces; serious and systematic violations of the human rights of women and girls, some of which targeted vulnerable groups such as indigenous women or women with disabilities; absence of adequate legislation to address and eliminate all forms of discrimination against women; ineffective implementation and/or enforcement of laws aimed at promoting and protecting women’s human rights; and failure by States to prevent violence and discrimination against women.

While expressing appreciation for the cooperation extended by the Governments that had submitted replies to the communications received, the Working Group noted the gap between the number of communications and the number of replies received. From the replies received, the Working Group was encouraged to note that some Governments had carried out investigations into the allegations made, explained their positions or taken measures, including improving the enforcement of existing legislation; introducing programmes and services to better protect and assist women; prosecuting perpetrators of violence; making efforts to guarantee the full enjoyment of human rights by women; and promoting gender equality and the advancement of women in accordance with relevant international standards.

UN-Women


Executive Board

First regular session. At its first regular session of the year (New York, 20 January) [UNW/2014/1], the Executive Board adopted the report on the second regular session of 2013 [UNW/2013/10] [YUN 2013, p. 1132]; approved the proposed provisional agenda and workplan for the annual session of 2014 (see below); and adopted the draft annual workplan for the year. It also adopted one decision [dec. 2014/1] requesting UN-Women to consolidate the report on operational activities and the one on the implementation of the strategic plan into one report to be presented at its annual session in June. The session included brief-
ings on the contribution of UN-Women to increasing women's leadership and participation in peace and security and in humanitarian response, and on a draft humanitarian strategy.

**Annual session.** At the annual session (New York, 17–19 June) [UNW/2014/5], the Executive Board adopted decisions on: the report of the Executive Director on progress made on the strategic plan 2011–2013, including operational activities in 2013 [UNW/2014/2]; the report on the evaluation function for 2013 [UNW/2014/3]; and the report on internal audit and investigation activities for 2013 [UNW/2014/4].

The session included a briefing on the joint evaluation of joint programmes—implemented by UN-Women along with other UN entities and Member States—on gender equality in the UN system, which was followed by briefings on management response to such programmes; on the evaluation function of UN-Women [UNW/2014/3] and the corporate evaluation plan 2014–2017; on the “Safe Cities” initiative in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea; on the UN-Women internal audit and investigation activities for 2013 [UNW/2014/4], as well as the second annual report of the Audit Advisory Committee in relation to UN-Women [UNW/2014/4/Add.1]; and on the field visit of the Executive Board to Panama and El Salvador, which took place from 23 March to 1 April and was the first visit of its kind to Latin America in over 10 years.

**Second regular session.** At its second regular session (New York, 15–16 September) [UNW/2014/7], the Executive Board adopted decisions on the election of the Bureau of the Executive Board [UNW/2014/6] and on the structured financing dialogue, as contained in the compilation of decisions adopted by the Board in 2014 [UNW/2014/6]. The session included presentations on the meta-analysis of evaluations managed by UN-Women in 2013 and on the management response to that meta-analysis. Briefings were held on the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and commemorative activities for the twentieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women; on the implementation of humanitarian work; and on the operational response at the country level.

All six decisions adopted by the Executive Board at its 2014 sessions were subsequently compiled in an October document [UNW/2014/6].

**Election of new members.** On 23 April, by decision 2014/201 A, the Economic and Social Council elected Germany, Turkey, Israel, Italy and Portugal to replace New Zealand, Iceland, Australia, Spain and Liechtenstein respectively, who were resigning their seats in the UN-Women Executive Board effective 1 January 2015. The Council also elected Denmark and Spain to replace Norway and Sweden, who were resigning their seats effective 1 January 2015.

### Functional areas

#### Operational activities

**UN-Women strategic plan 2011–2013.** In April, the Executive Director submitted to the Executive Board the final report [UNW/2014/2] on progress made in the implementation of the 2011–2013 strategic plan [YUN 2011, p. 1096], including operational activities in 2013. The report contained information on how UN-Women had responded to the recommendations of Assembly resolution 67/226 [YUN 2012, p. 859] on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the UN system.

Milestones in 2013 included the end of a three-year establishment phase and the realization of a new regional architecture for UN-Women in the field [YUN 2012, p. 1123]; further consolidation of the inter-agency coordination role of UN-Women; measurable improvements in organizational efficiency; and tangible impacts on the lives of women and girls in some 90 countries around the world. In 2013, UN-Women delivered approximately $133 million in country programmes, an implementation rate of 88 per cent of budgeted activities. UN-Women also broke new ground in engaging with humanitarian organizations, from working with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee on humanitarian response to interventions on the ground. Important advances were also made in women’s leadership and participation in peace and security processes. UN-Women played a key role in the work of the Security Council, as reflected, for example, in Council resolution 2122(2013) [YUN 2013, p. 1109], which reaffirmed gender equality and women’s empowerment as “critical to efforts to maintain international peace and security”.

Promoting greater coherence and accountability in the work of the UN system on gender equality and the empowerment of women was central to the Entity’s mandate through such efforts as leading the first reporting cycle for the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. UN-Women also used innovative coordination practices. For example, within the “Delivering as one” approach of the Liberia country team, UN-Women led the development of a single framework on gender. The Entity also contributed to the plan of action of the United Nations Development Group, which contained 55 measures to be undertaken at the Headquarters level for accelerating progress towards United Nations coherence and supporting the second generation of the initiative.

On the ground, UN-Women became a global presence, supporting 24 countries in their incorporation of priorities and budgets on gender equality and women’s empowerment into national planning instruments, and 19 countries in their adoption of
strenthened legislation addressing violence against women and girls, with greater numbers of women at the negotiating table in peacebuilding contexts.

In 2013, UN-Women was on track in 26 of the 32 performance indicators in its strategic plan, almost on track with 2 and off track with 4. It delivered direct programmatic support in 96 countries, with a focus on ending violence against women and on economic empowerment. The Entity supported women’s participation and leadership in 71 countries; promoted gender-responsive constitutional reforms and legal frameworks in 26 countries; and launched a new constitutional database, the first searchable database that looked at constitutions through a gender lens. It also supported women’s economic empowerment in 67 countries; efforts to end violence against women in 85 countries; worked on women’s leadership in peace, security and humanitarian response in 37 countries; and supported 65 countries in strengthening gender equality priorities in their plans and budgets.

In 2013, the Fund for Gender Equality, which directly supported women-led civil society organizations and governmental agencies working on programmes that politically and economically empowered women and girls, achieved major results in China, India and Zimbabwe. The United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women, in its seventeenth cycle, awarded $8 million in 17 grants, covering 18 countries and territories.

UN-Women funds were provided by both assessed and voluntary contributions. Assessed contributions (regular budget) totalled $15.2 million for the biennium 2012–2013, with $8 million being allocated for 2013. In 2013, UN-Women final revenue from voluntary contributions totalled $156.9 million in regular resources and $118.5 million in other resources, reflecting a revenue shortfall for the year of $124.6 million against the original target in the budget and of $56.9 million against the reforecast.

In geographic terms, the largest share of UN-Women total programme expenditure of $164.5 million went to country or regional offices in Africa ($63.7 million), followed by those in Asia and the Pacific ($45.2 million), Latin America and the Caribbean ($24.8 million), the Arab States ($16.1 million), and Europe and Central Asia ($14.7 million). The UN-Women Policy and Programme Bureau received $47.8 million and the Directorate, Bureau of Management, Bureau of Strategic Partnerships, and Intergovernmental Support received $51.7 million.

On 19 June, at its annual session, the Executive Board took note of the report [UNW/2014/6 (dec. 2014/2)] and welcomed the achievements made in the implementation of the first UN-Women strategic plan.

On 14 July, by decision 2014/228, the Economic and Social Council took note of the Secretariat note [E/2014/49] transmitting the reports of the UN-Women Executive Board on its first [UNW/2013/2] and second [UNW/2013/10] and annual session [UNW/2013/5] of 2013, as well as the decisions adopted by the Executive Board at that session [UNW/2013/11].

**UN-Women strategic plan 2014–2017.** On 16 September, by its decision 2014/6, the Executive Board decided to engage, on an annual basis, in a structured dialogue on financing with Member States to monitor and follow up on the level of funding, in particular of regular resources, as well as predictability, flexibility and alignment of other resources provided for the implementation of strategic plan 2014–2017 [YUN 2013, p. 1133].

**Normative support**

In response to resolution 64/289 [YUN 2010, p. 1396], the Executive Director of UN-Women [E/CN.6/2015/2] reported to the Commission on the Status on Women on normative aspects of the Entity’s work in 2014, with particular attention to the preparations for the 20-year review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and related activities. UN-Women provided support to the Commission, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, and the Security Council; engaged in other intergovernmental processes, such as the post-2015 development agenda and a set of sustainable development goals; the preparation for the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States; and the third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III); and worked with Governments and civil society to strengthen consensus on gender equality, the empowerment of women and the enjoyment of human rights by women and girls.

During 2014, UN-Women spearheaded the 20-year review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the related commemorative activities. A record number of national reviews were completed and 164 national reports submitted to the respective regional commissions and to UN-Women. In many countries, UN-Women provided technical assistance to governments and supported national mechanisms for gender equality. Whenever possible, UN-Women linked the Beijing review process to post-2015 consultations. The reviews provided important insights about progress made and remaining gaps in relation to gender equality and the empowerment of women. Further, UN-Women launched the communication campaign entitled “Empowering women, empowering humanity: Picture it!”; engaging constituencies on the 12 critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action; provided information on the Beijing Platform for Action and its 12 critical areas of concern [YUN 1995, p. 1171] through its trilingual website; and launched
its year-long global Beijing review and appraisal campaign at the Apollo Theater in New York City on 26 June, bringing together 1,200 supporters.

UN-Women provided support to Member States for the fifty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (see p. 1299), whose priority theme was “Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls”. The resulting agreed conclusions on the priority theme constituted the only intergovernmental outcome that assessed the situation of women and girls in regard to each Millennium Development Goal; identified gender equality issues that were insufficiently addressed in the Goals; provided policy recommendations to accelerate the achievement of the Goals for women and girls; and confirmed the strong relationship between development and the human rights of women and girls. The conclusions called for action in five areas: realizing women’s and girls’ full enjoyment of all human rights; strengthening the enabling environment for gender equality and the empowerment of women; maximizing investments in gender equality and the empowerment of women; strengthening the evidence-base for gender equality and the empowerment of women; and ensuring women’s participation and leadership at all levels and strengthening accountability.

In its support to the General Assembly, UN-Women prepared five mandated reports of the Secretary-General on efforts to eliminate violence against women; trafficking in women and girls; efforts for the elimination of female genital mutilation (see p. 873); implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and outcome of the twenty-third special session of the Assembly; and improvement in the status of women in the UN system. For the Economic and Social Council, UN-Women prepared the report of the Secretary-General on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the UN system.

In July, the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals [YUN 2012, p. 809] proposed a set of 17 sustainable development goals, including a goal to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, which included targets such as ending all forms of discrimination against women and girls; eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls; and ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights.

Owing to the UN-Women engagement in the preparations for the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (Apia, Samoa, 1–4 September), the outcome document of the Conference included a dedicated section recognizing that gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls were drivers of economic growth in small island developing States.

**Evaluation**

**Report on evaluation function, 2013.** In compliance with the UN-Women evaluation policy and the 2011–2013 strategic plan, the UN-Women Evaluation Office submitted its annual report [UNW/2014/3], presenting key performance indicators put in place to strengthen the internal evaluation function in 2013, as well as the programme of work for 2014.

The evaluation policy of UN-Women [YUN 2012, p. 1122] became effective in January 2013 and the Evaluation Advisory Committee was established in December of that year. At its first meeting, held in early February 2014, the Committee provided advice on the progress made by the evaluation function in UN-Women, as well as feedback on the strategic plan for evaluation 2014–2017 and the corporate evaluation plan 2014–2017. Also in December 2013, the Evaluation Office established a global evaluation oversight system, which presented key performance indicators for the evaluation function.

The Evaluation Office developed the corporate evaluation plan 2014–2017, which was presented at the 2014 annual session of the Executive Board (see p. 1302) and outlined the corporate evaluations to be managed by the Office during that period, in accordance with the strategic plan 2014–2017. Further, since field offices managed 89 per cent of UN-Women evaluations, the Evaluation Office, the Programme Division of UN-Women and the regional offices were working jointly to ensure that evaluations met internationally agreed evaluation standards. To this end, in December 2013, the Evaluation Office launched the global evaluation reports assessment and analysis system with the aim of improving the quality and use of decentralized evaluations. Additionally, the United Nations Evaluation Group, a voluntary network bringing together units responsible for evaluation in the UN system, developed a new strategy covering the period 2014–2019.

Since its launch in 2012, the number of evaluations available through the gender equality evaluation portal had continued to increase, counting, in 2013, 352 reports from 55 entities (an increase of 20 per cent from 2012). Further, at the International Conference on National Evaluation Capacities (São Paulo, Brazil, 2013), EvalPartners, a partnership advocating for environments that enabled quality and gender-responsive evaluations, declared 2015 the International Year of Evaluation. The Year was intended to contribute to high-level debates at the international and national levels on the role of evaluation in good governance for equitable human development.

The proposed programme of work for 2014 was aligned with the evaluation policy of UN-Women and followed the strategic plan 2014–2017, in which the independent Evaluation Office was requested to develop an annual workplan, specifying the activities
and results to be achieved each year in relation to four key areas: implementation of effective corporate evaluation systems; implementation of effective decentralized evaluation systems; promotion of United Nations coordination on gender-responsive evaluation; and strengthening of national evaluation capacities for gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation systems.

The budget of core resources for the Evaluation Office for 2014 was $1,730,000, with an additional $1,300,000 to cover the costs of the regional evaluation specialists. The Office also received cost-sharing funds from Switzerland ($675,000), Finland ($350,000) and the United States ($125,000).

On 19 June [UNW/2014/6 (dec. 2014/3)], the Executive Board took note of the report on the evaluation function for 2013 and of the programme of work for 2014, and requested the Entity to continue to strengthen its evaluation capacity.

**Administrative and budgetary matters**

**Board of Auditors report**

In its financial report and audited financial statements [A/69/9/Add.12] on UN-Women for the year ended 31 December 2013, the Board of Auditors reported a total revenue of $288.5 million and total expenses of $264.1 million, resulting in a surplus of $24.4 million. Of the total revenue, voluntary contributions accounted for $283.4 million and comprised: voluntary regular resources of $156.9 million (54.4 per cent) of all contributions, which were unearmarked and funded the operational requirements; voluntary other resources of $118.5 million (41.1 per cent), which were earmarked for specific programmes and projects; and assessed resources from the UN regular budget of $8 million (2.8 per cent), which funded the normative and intergovernmental work of UN-Women. The increase in voluntary contributions was a result of the resource mobilization strategy established in 2012 and positive donor support. The net current assets balance was $277.6 million, resulting from current assets of $312.7 million and current liabilities of $35.1 million. UN-Women thus had good short-term financial strength, with assets exceeding liabilities.

The Board regarded the implementation by UN-Women of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) in 2012 as a major achievement. Key findings of the report were related to the recognition and disclosure of revenue; the limited scope of inventory recognition; management of property, plant and equipment; long outstanding project advances; and understaffing of the procurement unit and improper delegates procurement authority.

The Board recommended that UN-Women improve coordination and information flow between the Strategic Partnership Division and the Finance Section to ensure that concluded agreements were recognized in correct periods, in line with the revenue accounting policy; review its Programme and Operations Manual to match the requirements of IPSAS 12 and improve its year-end closure instructions; review its current procurement catalogue to avoid, inter alia, misclassifications in the Atlas system; enhance its monitoring of advances to implementing partners to verify, among other things, the correct use of funds; and introduce a mechanism for ensuring that procurements below $30,000 were reviewed by a committee or an individual with procurement expertise.

**Report of Secretary-General.** By a September report [A/69/353/Add.1], the Secretary-General transmitted to the General Assembly the responses of the executive heads of the funds and programmes, including UN-Women, on measures taken or to be taken to implement the recommendations of the Board of Auditors.

UN-Women agreed with all the Board’s recommendations. With reference to the recommendation of improving the coordination and information flow between the Strategic Partnership Division and the Finance Section, UN-Women reconfirmed that coordination between the two was regular and consistent. There had been monthly meetings held during 2013 and a year-end meeting was held where the Strategic Partnership Division confirmed to the Finance Section that all pledges were included as regular resources prior to preparation of the financial statements. Concerning the recommendation to review its Programme and Operations Manual to match the requirements of IPSAS 12, UN-Women informed the Board that the Manual had been updated in line with the Accounting Policy Manual and IPSAS 12, Inventories.

Concerning the recommendation to review its current procurement catalogue, UN-Women developed and issued new asset verification and impairment guidelines to the business units to enhance the documentation and credibility of the physical verification process. UN-Women also completed the migration of the assets to the newly created business unit codes to ensure accountability of the assets by each business unit rather than by the regional offices. Concerning the recommendation to enhance its monitoring of advances to implementing partners, UN-Women informed the Board that it had put in place mechanisms to follow up outstanding advances. Additional measures taken during 2013 included messages from senior management to offices to aggressively pursue advances older than 12 months. Those efforts resulted in a more than 50 per cent reduction in long-outstanding advances as at 30 September 2013. In response to the Board of Auditor’s recommendation to ensure that procurements below $30,000 were reviewed by a committee, UN-Women was considering initiating a quality-check mechanism for low value procurement between $5,000 and $30,000.
Internal audit and investigation activities

In April [UNW/2014/4], the UN-Women Audit Unit and the Investigations Section (both part of the Office of Audit and Investigations of the United Nations Development Programme) submitted a report on the Entity’s internal audit and investigation function for 2013. The results of the internal audits indicated that the internal controls, governance and risk management processes audited were generally functioning but needed improvement. No significant investigation matters were identified in 2013. The report of the Audit Advisory Committee of UN-Women and the management response thereto were contained in an addendum to the report [UNW/2014/4/Add.1].

On 19 June [UNW/2014/6 (dec. 2014/4)], the Executive Board took note of the two reports and requested UN-Women to present a separate budget line for internal audit and investigation activities in the integrated budget for the biennium 2016–2017, to be considered by the Executive Board at its second regular session of 2015.