



Agenda item 28: Advancement of Women

Report of the Secretary General on

Mr. Chairman,

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

I take this opportunity to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, and the members of the Bureau on your election and wish you a successful session.

Two years ago, the Third Committee, and subsequently the General Assembly adopted the resolution (A/RES/65/188) on "Supporting efforts to end obstetric fistula". The resolution was co-sponsored by 172 Member States and requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on its implementation.

Today it is my honour to present the Report of the Secretary-General on "Supporting efforts to end obstetric fistula", contained in document A/67/258.

Mr. Chairman,

Every day almost 800 women die from complications of pregnancy. For every woman who dies, 20 or more are injured or disabled. One of the most serious injuries of childbearing is obstetric fistula, a hole in the birth canal, caused by prolonged, obstructed labour due to lack of timely and adequate medical care.

The Secretary-General's Report states, as a result of prolonged, obstructed labour, in most cases, the baby is stillborn or dies within the first week of life, and the woman suffers a devastating injury that leaves her incontinent, ashamed, ostracized and alone. Many women and girls who

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

analysis, improved management of obstetric fistula, and strengthened political and financial commitments.

The Commission on Economic and Social Development, CC- (Geneva, 1994), in its report on the