

## **Annex XII: Significance of Beijing +20 for the attainment of parity**

1. With the publication of this report nearing the twentieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration in 2015, it is fitting to reaffirm its relevance to the issue of gender parity within the UN system. Repeatedly endorsed by UN Member States, the Declaration established gender equality as a human right, requiring the full participation of women “in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power, [as] fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace.”<sup>1</sup>
2. Paragraph 193c of the Platform for Action mandates actions to be taken by the United Nations, including that it “continue to collect and disseminate quantitative and qualitative data on women and men in decision-making and analyse their differential impact on decision-making and monitor progress towards achieving the Secretary-General's target of having women hold 50 per cent of managerial and decision-making positions by the year 2000.”
3. Regrettably, nearly 20 years after the Beijing Conference, the United Nations system continues to face significant challenges in achieving the equal representation of women,

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<sup>1</sup> Beijing Declaration, para 13

particularly at senior decision-making levels.<sup>2</sup> The underrepresentation of women at those levels highlights the continued need for systemic “effective, efficient and mutually reinforcing gender-sensitive policies and programmes...at all levels that will foster the empowerment and advancement of women.”<sup>3</sup>

4. In its 57<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) requested the CSW review and appraise implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in 2015.<sup>4</sup> While the review is to focus on assessing progress by Member States and other stakeholders in all its 12 critical areas, a stronger, coordinated and system-wide commitment to implementing the principles of the Beijing Platform for Action within the United Nations system is also necessary for the United Nations to lead by example.

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<sup>2</sup>As of December 2013, the representation of women on contracts of one year or more, at all locations in the UN system remains below 35 per cent for levels P-5 and above. At the UG level there was a 2.5 percentage point decrease from 2012 to 2013.

<sup>3</sup> Beijing Declaration, para 19

<sup>4</sup> E/2013/27, Section B, Draft Resolution 1, preamble para 3