

**SECRETARY-GENERAL WELCOMES CONCLUSION OF 'HISTORIC'
SESSION OF WOMEN'S COMMISSION,**

URGES ACTION TO PREVENT, END ALL GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

March 15, 2013

The following statement was issued today by the Spokesperson for UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon:

The Secretary-General welcomes the outcome of the fifty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women and the agreement reached on the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls. He commends the leadership of United Nations Member States to take action to prevent violence and provide justice and services to survivors.

The Secretary-General thanks all participants, including representatives of Governments, intergovernmental organizations, civil society and colleagues of the United Nations. He expresses special appreciation to UN-Women and Executive Director Michelle Bachelet for their strong support to the Commission to ensure a successful outcome.

Violence against women is a heinous human rights violation, global menace, a public health threat and a moral outrage. No matter where she lives, no matter what her culture, no matter what her society, every woman and girl is entitled to live free of fear. She has the universal human right to be free from all forms of violence so as to fulfil her full potential and dreams for the future.

States have a corresponding responsibility to turn that right into reality. The Secretary-General hopes that all the partners who came together at this historic session and others around the world will now translate this agreement into concrete action to prevent and end violence against women and girls. The United Nations system is fully committed to leading this global effort.