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**The Permanent Mission of Iceland  
to the United Nations**

**Statement by  
H.E. Ambassador Gréta Gunnarsdóttir  
Permanent Representative**

**GA67 / Item 28 - Advancement of Women  
3<sup>rd</sup> Committee**

16 October 2012

*CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY*

Mr. Chair,

Allow me to start by congratulating you and other members of the Bureau with your election to this very important committee. You can rest assured that the Icelandic Delegation will work with the Bureau in the spirit of cooperation throughout this session.

Mr. Chair,

Our greatest achievement on advancing women's rights at the international level has to be the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women – CEDAW. Iceland attaches great importance to the universal ratification and full implementation of the Convention and calls upon all States that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to CEDAW. We also call upon those States which have made reservations that are incompatible with the purposes and objective of the treaty, to immediately withdraw them.

In general terms we also want to emphasize the importance of the commitments made by all of us in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and reiterate the need to speed up the implementation of these commitments at all levels. Here, gender mainstreaming is key and all stakeholders, including Member States, the UN system itself and civil society, must reinforce their efforts.

It is extremely important for gender equality and women's empowerment to be

essential in all UN processes most significantly in the number

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Iceland is a staunch supporter of the campaign to end fistula and efforts to improve maternal health worldwide. The campaign has already demonstrated that tangible results can be achieved in eradicating this silent epidemic. We encourage more countries to become direct financial supporters of the campaign so that the goal of eradicating this scourge, that causes so much suffering to women and their families, can be realized.

Mr. Chair,

Allow me also to express Iceland's support for the initiative of the African group to intensify global efforts for the elimination of FGM - female genital mutilation. We believe the high-level meeting organized by Benin and Burkina Faso during the General Debate sent a strong signal of the commitment of our

supporters of the joint UNICEF-UNFPA programme on FGM/C in 2011. Even though we have not yet reached our common goal of a global ban the