



INTER-AFRICAN COMMITTEE ON TRADITIONAL PRACTICES (IAC)
Affecting the Health of Women and Children

COMITÉ INTER-AFRICAIN SUR LES PRATIQUES TRADITIONNELLES (CI-AF)
Affectant la santé des femmes et des enfants

Press release

International Zero Tolerance Day for Female Genital Mutilation

February 6, 2018

Theme:

Ending Female Genital Mutilation is a political decision.

Zero tolerance of Regional and Sub regional Institutions.

On February 6, 2003, the Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children concluded in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, its international Zero Tolerance Conference on Female Genital Mutilation, with the participation of all partners including the United Nations, which accepted the proposal of the Inter-African Committee to adopt February 6 as the International Zero Tolerance Day for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

On 11 July 2003, the African Heads of States adopted in Maputo, Mozambique, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women, which states in article 5:

States prohibit and condemn all forms of harmful practices that negatively affect women's human rights and are contrary to international standards. States shall take all legislative and other measures to eradicate such practices, including:

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(a) Sensitizing all sectors of society on harmful practices through information, formal and non-formal education and communication campaigns and programs;

(b) Prohibiting through legislative measures with sanctions, all forms of female genital mutilation, scarification, medicalization and para-medicalization of female genital mutilation and all other harmful practices;

(c) Providing the necessary support to the victims of harmful practices with basic services such as; health services, legal and judicial assistance, counselling, adequate supervision and vocational training to enable them to take care of their wellbeing;

On December 20, 2012, UN General Assembly Resolution A / RES / 67/146 unanimously adopted to reinforce these commitments of the international community in Article 21:

" 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; "

In 2015, the United Nations called for an end to FGM in 2030 through the adoption of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), **Goal 5**: "Achieving Gender Equality and Empowering Women" and **sub-goal 5.3**: "To eliminate all forms of harmful practices such as child marriage and female genital mutilation"

Despite these important statements and appreciable progress including the general downward trend in the prevalence of FGM, 200 million women and girls have undergone some form of this practice in 2014 and 2 million are at risk each year.

To translate these important international commitments into concrete actions on the ground, there need to be a synergy of action by communities, civil society organizations, governments, sub-regional and regional organizations, backed by strong policies; hence the theme of this year's International Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation Day:

Ending Female Genital Mutilation is a political decision.

Zero tolerance of Regional and Sub regional Institutions.

To this effect, the Inter-African Committee and its partners make a solemn appeal to Heads of States and Governments, to the Community, sub-regional, regional and international political authorities so that under their leadership and with their full commitment, the whole world will mobilize to put an end to female genital mutilation as soon as possible.

In villages, towns, schools, universities, farms, churches, synagogues, mosques, in the media, on sports fields, during artistic and cultural events ..., the whole world (women, men and youth) must mobilize to eliminate female genital mutilation completely and institute zero tolerance to this degrading practice.

February 6, 2018, lets cry out loud to the world with strength and conviction:

Stop FGM !

For the Inter-African Committee

Mrs. Sika KABORE

First Lady of Burkina Faso

Inter-African Committee's Goodwill Ambassador