



Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation

On 6 February Soroptimists will show their solidarity with the at least 200 million women and girls still suffering the consequences worldwide by marking the UN International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). On this occasion, we also repeat our call for all nations to sign and ratify the Istanbul Convention which recognises FGM as a serious form of Violence Against Women and Girls.

Indeed, although it is condemned by several international treaties and conventions and banned by law in many countries, this traditional practice involving cutting female genitalia for non-medical reasons is still widespread in Africa and Asia, and is even performed in Europe. It is a violation of the human rights of girls and women and a clear example of violence against women. FGM also reflects deep-rooted inequality between the sexes and is therefore an extreme form of discrimination against women and girls.

For all these reasons, Soroptimist International of Europe supports the target of the UN Sustainable Development Goals to eliminate FGM by 2030. To underline its unequivocal stand towards this form of violence against women, our members have worked actively to raise awareness of the implications of FGM, educate women and men about the dangers, provide shelter to victims and even played an active role in reversing the medical consequences. For more information, see our statement on FGM (<http://www.soroptimisteurope.org/advocacy/our-statements>).

Maria Elisabetta de Franciscis
SIE President 2015-2017