
Female genital mutilation: EU Commission, “it is not a cultural or traditional practice, but a crime and violation of human rights”

“No woman or girl should suffer from violence”. Female genital mutilation (FGM) is “a severe violation of human rights and an act of violence against women and girls”. Ahead of the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation on 6 February, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs, Josep Borrell, and EU Commissioners Věra Jourová, Dubravka Šuica, Helena Dalli and Jutta Urpilainen, joined together to reaffirm the “EU’s strong commitment to eradicate female genital mutilation”. They stated: “It is estimated that more than 200 million women and girls worldwide have suffered from FGM. In Europe, at least 600,000 women and girls are living with the consequences of FGM, often severely affecting their health and well-being, even endangering their lives. COVID-19 has disrupted prevention programmes, seriously undermining progress towards reducing this heinous practice. Any backward step puts thousands of women and girls at risk”. Female genital mutilation “cannot be justified as a cultural or traditional practice – it is a crime and a violation of human rights”. “Many people and communities are abandoning” this practice. “Change is possible, and it is happening”.

Valentina Bombelli