

**From:** Giselle Portenier [mailto:████████████████████]

**Sent:** Saturday, December 28, 2019 10:13 AM

**To:** corporate <corporate@whistler.ca>

**Cc:** Duane Jackson <djackson@whistler.ca>; Arthur De Jong <adejong@whistler.ca>; John Grills <jgrills@whistler.ca>; Jack Crompton <jcrompton@whistler.ca>; j.ford@whistler.ca; r.forsyth@whistler.ca; c.jewett@whistler.ca

**Subject:** Request for a proclamation for February 6th 2020

- Dear Mayor and City Councillors,

I am a human rights filmmaker, journalist and activist. Today, I'm writing you as the co-founder of the End FGM Canada Network to request a proclamation for International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation on **February 6th, 2020**.

You will find out more about our Network and FGM in the attachments. Also included is the actual suggested proclamation which we are in the process of sending to city councils around the country from St. John's Newfoundland to Victoria, B.C. in the hope to get proclamations approved from coast to coast.

Just briefly—Female Genital Mutilation is a gross human rights abuse perpetrated on girls and women every 11 seconds of every day somewhere in the world. There are currently 200 million survivors worldwide, and **upwards of 100,000 in Canada**.

There are also **girls at risk in Canada**, as confirmed in federal government documents.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is extremely traumatizing, debilitating, and even causes death.

There is evidence that girls in Canada are being taken outside of Canada for 'vacation cutting,' and that cutters may be being brought into Canada.

This is not a question of religion, ethnicity, or nationality. FGM is practiced among many religions including Christianity, Islam, and Animists.. It happens in Africa, the Middle East, South America, Asia, and the West—in short, it's an issue on **every continent except Antarctica**.

February 6th has been proclaimed by the UN as the day where we focus attention on this issue.

With our proclamation we hope to draw attention to this world-wide problem, and to raise awareness that this is an issue in Canada as well. We have immigrants from all kinds of practicing diasporas including the Middle East, Africa, and Asia in every province of our nation— there are bound to be survivors, even in Whistler.

We would be delighted if you could also light a local landmark in honour of Zero Tolerance Day.

Should you need any further invitation please don't hesitate to contact me.

Thank you so much for considering this proclamation.

warm wishes

Giselle Portenier,  
Co-founder, End FGM Canada Network,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

# The End FGM/C Canada Network



## Our Mission

The End FGM/C Canada Network is a non-partisan group of individuals and organizations working to end female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) both in Canada and abroad.

We focus on urging the Canadian government to acknowledge that FGM/C is an issue here too, and to create a National Action Plan to support survivors and to protect girls at risk in Canada. In addition, we work to encourage the Canadian government to take a lead internationally and focus more development aid on the human rights battle to end FGM/C worldwide.

To do this, we bring together our members and other stakeholders to collectively influence the policies and practices of the Canadian government.

## Our Values

**Human-Rights Approach:** The End FGM/C Canada Network is grounded in a human rights approach. We consider FGM/C to be an extremely harmful practice, a form of gender-based violence, and a violation of the fundamental rights of girls, women, and non-binary children/adults. We are aligned with the United Nations' policy of zero tolerance for FGM.

**Diversity:** We are an inclusive organization and value diverse backgrounds, experiences, ethnicities, services and sectors.

**Respect:** We believe in solidarity between organizations and we respect one another and engage in respectful and thoughtful dialogue.

**Anti-discrimination:** In our efforts to end FGM/C, we believe in approaching the issue with sensitivity towards individuals and communities, and we reject any form of discrimination and racism.

**Supporting empowerment:** We deeply value listening to, prioritizing, and honouring survivors of FGM/C and girls at risk, and we are committed to elevating their voices as Network members. We value the voices of youth and grassroots organizations and support their work through the Network's collective efforts.

**Collective efforts:** We bring together individuals and organizations to stand together to end FGM/C, to share information, exchange promising practices, amplify our efforts and voices, and work together to urge the Canadian government to take effective action.

**Trauma-informed:** We work with an awareness of the varied physical, social, and emotional impacts of trauma caused by FGM/C on individuals (including survivors, activists and professionals) and communities. We value self-care and community care of our members and volunteers.

---

## Membership

**Membership** is open to organizations and individuals who are

- based in Canada
- actively engaged in working on the issue of FGM/C or intending to be actively engaged
- aligned with and committed to supporting the Network's values

Each voting member is eligible to participate in member listservs, access member-only events and materials, participate on working groups and discussion groups, and serve on the Steering Committee when vacancies arise.

Organizations with multiple members shall appoint one voting representative for the organization.

**International Membership** is open to organizations and individuals who are

- not based in Canada
- actively engaged in working on the issue of FGM/C
- aligned with and committed to supporting the Network's values

International members may participate in member listservs, access member-only events and materials, and participate on working groups and discussion groups. International members are not eligible to vote in Network elections.

There is no membership fee.

Alignment with the Network's values is critical. For example, organizations that tie the FGM/C issue to an anti-immigration or religious discrimination agenda are not appropriate members of the Network.

---



## **International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation**

**February 6, 2020**

**Whereas** International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is observed around the world and provides an opportunity to honour those women, girls, boys and men who are actively and courageously working towards an end to this harmful practice.

**Whereas** this day invites us to reflect on the fact that 3.9 million girls are still at risk of mutilation each year, including girls in Canada.

**Whereas** on this day, we acknowledge that female genital mutilation is an issue on every continent except Antarctica, and that there are 200 million FGM survivors in the world, including thousands in Canada.

**Whereas** we acknowledge that FGM has no basis in any religious text and is recognized by the United Nations and other world bodies as child abuse and an abuse of a girl's fundamental human rights.

**Whereas** we acknowledge that FGM has no benefits and causes only harm, including death, difficulties with urination, menstruation, sexual intimacy, post-traumatic stress disorder and increased maternal and child mortality.

**Whereas** on this International Day of Zero Tolerance For FGM, we acknowledge and celebrate all national and international efforts being made, especially at the grass roots level, to achieve United Nations Sustainable Millennium Development Goal #5, which calls for the elimination of FGM and other harmful traditional practices by 2030.

**Whereas** on this Day of Zero Tolerance, we call for increased, concerted global and Canadian action to end female genital mutilation, and ask all governments-international, national, and local- to fully uphold the human rights of women and girls so they can live a life free from the violence that is female genital mutilation.

**NOW THEREFORE**, I Mayor Jack Crompton on behalf of Whistler Council, do hereby proclaim February 6, 2020, as International Day of Zero Tolerance for FGM in the town of Whistler.