

Dear Mayor and City Councillors of Whistler,

Thank you again for proclaiming February 6, 2020 as International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation!

You were the first to do so last year (thank you!!!) but were followed by dozens of cities from St. John's Newfoundland all the way to Victoria; four provinces also proclaimed the day. It was remarkable.

This year, the End FGM Canada Network is looking to double the number of proclamations that were issued last year, and we hope we can count on you to participate again and proclaim February 6th 2021 as International Day of Zero Tolerance for FGM.

Attached is the suggested proclamation.

As you will remember, Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) is a gross human rights abuse perpetrated on girls and women every 10 seconds of every day somewhere in the world. There are currently more than 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 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**. A recent [Equality Now report](#) indicates that there are more than 90 countries worldwide where Female Genital Mutilation is an issue. And COVID19 has had a disastrous effect on the campaign to #EndFGM0 the UN estimates an extra 2 million girls will be cut in the next ten years.

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

With these Canadian proclamations we are hoping to continue to try 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 information please don't hesitate to contact me.

Thank you so much for considering this proclamation again!

***Please, if this is approved, could you send the physical proclamation to my Vancouver address:

Giselle Portenier



With very warm wishes

Giselle Portenier,

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