

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

END FGM European Campaign

EU Press release

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EU Institutions support “Sign a rose petal” action against female genital mutilation

(25 November 2010, Brussels) On the occasion of International Day of Elimination of Violence against Women, Amnesty International’s END FGM European Campaign has launched a Europe-wide action to raise at least 8,000 signatures on rose petals in solidarity with the 8,000 girls and women worldwide who are forcibly subjected to the practice of female genital mutilation (FGM) every day.

The President of the European Parliament, Jerzy Buzek, has shown his commitment to the issue by wearing a rose petal on this day. “Women are the flowers of our life. I strongly support the campaign to end female genital mutilation worldwide. I invite all members of this House to wear a rose petal to show their support to stop the atrocity of genital mutilation of 8000 girls per day. European Parliament highlights once again that female genital mutilation is a serious assault on women’s health and a violation of human rights, as well as a savage breach of the integrity and personality of women and girls”, affirmed **President Buzek**.

END FGM European Campaign is urging decision makers and public across the European Union (EU) to sign a rose petal at one of the stands in their respective countries or a virtual petal online at www.endfgm.eu to support a European Union-wide strategy to end FGM and protect women and girls at risk. **European Commission Vice President Viviane Reding** signed the rose petal this morning at the EU Conference on Violence against Women, which is being hosted by the Belgian Presidency of the EU at Hilton Hotel Salon Louise, Brussels.

In Europe, 500,000 women and girls are estimated to be living with the lifelong physical and psychological consequences of female genital mutilation.

“I urge all the high level dignitaries and decision makers to not only sign the rose petal but also use the platform of this conference to declare their next steps on bringing female genital mutilation to an end”, concluded **Dr Christine Loudes**, Campaign Director, END FGM European Campaign, Amnesty International.

NOTE TO EDITOR:

A violation of the rights of women and girls, FGM should be tackled through an EU-wide strategy which addresses the following five key areas, which have been identified in consultation with over a dozen grassroots organisations working directly with the affected communities across Europe:

1. Data collection on the prevalence and risk of FGM in EU countries
2. Provision of targeted health services
3. Prevention and protection mechanisms to address violence against women and children
4. International protection for those fleeing from risk of FGM
5. Raising FGM in EU’s political dialogues with FGM-practicing countries

The “Sign a rose petal” action will last throughout the 16 days of activism against gender violence (25 November - 10 December 2010) with public stands in a number of locations across the EU. For details of public stands and sign up areas or to sign a rose petal online, go to www.endfgm.eu.

For further information or to arrange interviews:

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