

On the International Day for the Rejection of Female Genital Mutilation ...and the experience of Eritrea

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On February 6, the world celebrated the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation, as it is practiced every year. On this occasion, the United Nations revealed the increase in cases of violence against women and girls, Harmful practices, such as female genital mutilation. And in a recorded message the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, Amina Muhammad, she revealed that the closure of schools for nearly 10 months led to an increase in the rates of female genital mutilation in secret, and the protection mechanisms for women and girls collapsed. The United Nations gave an example in Sudan, saying that more cases had been reported, as statistics revealed that 12 million girls were subjected to mutilation and amputation of their genitals.

In Kenya, female genital mutilation increased by 121% in 9 provinces during 2020. As is evident from the examples, the crime of female genital mutilation is unfortunately carried out in our region (the Horn of Africa) on a large scale, without restrictions or laws that deter it in some areas, especially rural areas and remote villages. In its report, humanitarian organizations warned that two million females face the risk of female genital mutilation by 2030, joining nearly 200 million victims of this inhuman practice.

This occasion comes as our country has achieved more successes in combating female genital mutilation.

The awareness campaigns and efforts undertaken by the National Union of Eritrean Women in cooperation with partners have worked and are backed by laws and decrees by the government that criminalize female genital mutilation and considers it an illegal act(Where the government issued Decree No. 158/2007 criminalizing female genital mutilation and punishing or encouraging anyone who practices it).

These efforts and awareness campaigns have been crowned with great success, so that some administrations announced their complete elimination of this harmful habit.

Today, we can say that our country has succeeded in eradicating the practice of female genital mutilation, as a result of the great role played by the National Union for Women and the keenness of all responsible authorities and partners to implement laws that prohibit female genital mutilation, and also the education has a great role in preventing and eliminating this habit, especially if The demand for education for women in Eritrea and the increase in their participation in all levels and degrees of education, including higher education, (as their percentage in some stages exceeded 47%), which led to the spread and growth of awareness of the biological and social harms caused by female genital mutilation.

Our society with all its sectors have started In order to work to combat female genital mutilation and consider it a crime against women and society, On this occasion, it is necessary to pay tribute and appreciation to the role of the National Union of Eritrean Women, and to the women in Eritrea who have aware of the damages that female genital mutilation causes on them and on society, and

therefore worked diligently in cooperation with all parties for the success of the campaign to combat female genital mutilation.

We hope that the rest of the countries, especially the neighboring countries in which the practice of female circumcision is widespread, will follow the example of Eritrea, by benefiting from the experience of Eritrea in combating this crime, in order to work to reach the elimination of all harmful customs that impede the progress of societies, so that it can branch to launch towards broader horizons. To achieve growth, progress and prosperity for all.