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## **Female genital mutilation: European Union, zero tolerance. “Eradicating this crime that is a violation of human rights”**

In the run-up to World Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation on February 6<sup>th</sup>, the EU’s High Representative for Foreign Affairs, Josep Borrell, the deputy presidents of the EU Commission, Věra Jourová and Dubravka Šuica, and Commissioners Helena Dalli and Jutta Urpilainen jointly reiterated the “firm determination of the European Union to eradicate female genital mutilation across the world”, which – as stated in a joint release – is a violation of human rights and a form of violence against women and girls. It has no health benefits and damages women and girls throughout their lives”. Such mutilations “affect over 200 million people across the world, with 600 thousands of them living in Europe, as estimated. We must act firmly to bring change, to eradicate this practice, if we want to achieve the ‘zero female genital mutilations’ goal of the Sustainable Development Goals by the deadline, that is, by 2030”. To this end, “it is essential to change social and gender rules and build collaborations with men and boys. Since 2016, the EU has been supporting the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on the elimination of female genital mutilations” across the world.

Valentina Bombelli