

Joint Intervention on behalf of:

**FDI World Dental Federation
International Council of Nurses
International Pharmaceutical Federation
World Medical Association**

**61st World health Assembly
Geneva, May 2008**

Item 11.8, Female Genital Mutilation

Honourable Members of the World Health Assembly,

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak. This is a joint statement on behalf of four health professions dentistry, nursing, medicine, and pharmacy, whose representative organizations are all in official relations with WHO and which form together the World Health Professional Alliance. Together we represent national associations in more than 150 countries, and the collective views of more than 25 million health professionals.

Our organisations welcome the report by the secretariat on female genital mutilation (FGM), noting the slow rate of decline of these practices, and praise the draft resolution proposed today for your consideration.

Because of its serious detrimental impact on the physical and mental health of women and girls, female genital mutilation is a matter of deep concern to us as health professionals. We consider that FGM is a gross form of violence against women and girls and constitutes a violation of fundamental rights. We are particularly worried about WHO report on the increased practice of FGM by physicians and other health professionals. FGM is absolutely in contradiction with our codes of ethics.

We therefore urge health professional associations to develop educational programs that would:

- Include adequate information on the acute danger of female genital mutilation for women and girls;
- Raise awareness on such practices as a severe violation of women's human rights that health professionals should not practice under any circumstances,
- Encourage health professionals to inform women, men and children about FGM and discourage them from performing or promoting such practices.

We pledge to work to eliminate the practice of FGM by health professionals in any setting.

We are calling on the World Health Assembly to adopt a strong resolution condemning without reservation female genital mutilations and urging Members States, with the support of all relevant national and international actors, to develop, intensify and accelerate their actions towards the total eradication of such practices.

I thank you for your attention

World Medical Association