



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

IN SUPPORT OF THE FIGHT AGAINST FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION, THE UNITED NATIONS DIRECTOR GENERAL MICHAEL MØLLER WILL PARTICIPATE IN A CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED BY THE GLOBAL ALLIANCE AGAINST FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION CALLED «YES YOU CAN SAY NO - PICTURE IT!». HE WILL HOLD A PAINTING NAMED «EXCISION» CREATED BY QUEBEC ARTIST PATRICK GIGNAC. THE CAMPAIGN IS USING THIS ART PIECE TO CREATE THE BIGGEST HUMAN CHAIN OF MEN AND WOMEN OF ALL CULTURES SAYING NO TO FGM.

The Global Alliance against Female Genital Mutilation (GA-FGM) is a French association acting in the Pays de Gex and within the International Geneva. The GA-FGM was founded in 2010 by a Canadian-German couple: Ms Elisabeth Wilson and Mr Holger Postular. This non-profit organisation uses culture, music and arts in its awareness and educational campaigns. The NGO is also facilitating cultural and academic collaborations between old peoples. This innovative strategy has opened the door, for the first time in the history of this cause, to the involvement of artists and leaders of the First Nations of Canada.

The GA-FGM develops global educational programs such as the creation of the first University Chair on Public Health and Human Rights with a focus on FGM, an on-going project to be realized in collaboration with Geneva University.

The awareness campaign called «YES YOU CAN SAY NO - PICTURE IT!» was launched in 2012, after the GA-FGM cofounders met with Quebec painter Patrick Gignac. On this occasion, in support of the fight against FGM, the artist decided to give free of rights his painting called «Excision» to the GA-FGM. «Excision» strikes the mind by its simplicity: on the left side tied up blood-drenched legs, on the right side the face of a sad woman subjected to FGM, hoping that one day the practice of excision will be abolished.

The campaign's principle is simple: people are asked to hold «Excision» while a picture of them is taken. This photo is then posted on the NGO's Facebook platform called «YES YOU CAN SAY NO - PICTURE IT!».



«Excision» left Quebec and was sent to the United Nations Head Quarters in New-York. From that point it was held by international public servants, by-passers, tourists, adults, adolescents and children. Following that, it was held at UNESCO in Paris, then in Germany during a concert given by Dutch Jazzman Jasper van't Hof, cultural Ambassador of the GA-FGM. «Excision» then arrived in the Pays de Gex and Haute Savoie, where it was held by teenagers during a series of charity concerts organised by the GA-FGM. The painting finally went to Geneva where it was held in public places, schools, shops, and in front of the United Nations Agencies. Thanks to a local French association operating in Kenya, Maasai women subjected to FGM held a copy of the painting and posted their picture on the GA-FGM's Facebook platform.

In February 2015 Grand Chief Constant Awashish of the Atikamekw Nation of Quebec became the first Native leader to join the campaign that is promoted in Canada since 2013 by Ms Pat Halfmoon Bruderer of the Cree Nation of Manitoba.

By participating in the campaign «YES YOU CAN SAY NO - PICTURE IT!» the United Nations Director General Mr Michael Møller will promote grassroots efforts coming from small organisations who said «YES» to the vibrant call issued by the United Nations Secretary general appealing the private sector, civil society and NGOs to help him eradicate FGM in less than one generation. His support will motivate decision-makers and celebrities to follow his example and be a part of the biggest human chain ever created saying NO to FGM.

VENUE: UNITED NATIONS DIRECTOR GENERAL'S OFFICE

DATE: 11 MAY 2015

HOUR: 2:30 PM

Present:

Elisabeth Wilson and Holger Postulart, cofounders of the GA-FGM

Captain Christine de St Genois de Grand Breucq, GA-FGM Ambassador to the UN

Pat «Halfmoon» Bruderer, GA-FGM Ambassador in Canada

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