

# NEWSFLASH

## ZERO TOLERANCE AGAINST FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

Keren, Anseba  
6 February 2010

Residents of zoba Anseba and the town of Keren turned up in multitudes on Saturday 6 February 2010 to commemorate the day against female genital mutilation: Zero Tolerance Against Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). The theme of the day was the role of men and boys in the eradication of female genital mutilation. The whole day colourful event was characterised by speeches, poems, testimonies, general knowledge, marathon, bicycle race and a carnival show. Different speakers, including children took turns to denounce the practice and its harmful effects. One child, giving a poem, asked rhetorically why women would inflict such a terrible act on their own counterparts.



**Residents turned up in their multitudes**

The Deputy Representative of UNICEF, Juan Carlos Espinola called FGM a violation of human rights and more especially a violation of children's rights. He congratulated the Eritrean government for passing a law against FGM, a milestone among the few countries in Africa that have done so. He appreciated the efforts that have been made to make the day a success and noted that this commemoration and what it stands for are taken seriously in this country.



**UNICEF Deputy Representative Juan Carlos: FGM is a violation of children's rights.**

A former circumciser who denounced the practice as far back as 1993 said the practice has been perpetuated over decades because of lack of knowledge. 'We thought it was our ancestor's beliefs but it is just the devil's work', she said. She circumcised five of her six daughters but got a terrible scare, when after circumcising her first granddaughter, the child bled non-stop until she turned pale blue. Fortunately, the child survived, but she swore never to perform FGM, and when the government banned it in 2007, she welcomed the proclamation wholeheartedly.



**A former circumciser tells UNICEF's Samuel Isaac how she denounced the practice**

This day against FGM is a nationwide event in Eritrea and other zobas also undertook different activities in their areas.

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# PICTORIAL

Key messages



One of UNICEF's projects is the donkey-for-school project. It delighted the Chief of Child Protection Gbemisola Akinboyo to see the children using donkeys to perform chores for their families.



Key messages



Carnival display



Key messages



Former circumcisers and traditional birth attendants

