



**The Holy Bible**



**The Holy Koran**

# **Ouagadougou Declaration**

**On Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)  
by African Religious Leaders**

**December 14, 2005**



We, Christian and Muslim Religious Leaders, representing Member States of the Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children (IAC), gathered in symposium successively in Cairo (Egypt) and Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso) at the initiative of IAC,

- Greatly appreciating this opportunity to exchange information between various religious leaders, all beliefs and orientations considered;
- Considering the fact that Female Genital Mutilation ( FGM) constitutes a flagrant violation of human rights, and a serious infringement to the physical, psychological and moral integrity of women and children;
- Convinced that FGM carries short-, medium- and long-term harmful consequences on the health of women and children;
- Convinced that Female Genital Mutilation has no religious foundation neither in the Holy Bible, nor in authentic Christian traditions; neither in the Holy Koran, nor in authentic Islamic traditions;
- Considering the previous declarations of very high Christian and Muslim religious authorities on the absence of any link between FGM and religion;
- Aware of the fact that the complete eradication of FGM can only be achieved through an organized fight involving all actors of the social arena;
- Determined not to spare any efforts to put an end .to this harmful practice;

1. **Pledge** to participate actively in the fight for the total rejection of FGM, not only in our respective countries, but also wherever this practice exists;

2. **Urge scholars**, exegetes and other Christian and Muslim authorities, to broadcast, at any place and any time, Biblical and Koranic authentic Christian and Islamic traditions which confirm the unfounded nature of this practice;
3. **Call** on faithful Christians and Muslims to abandon this practice in all of its forms;
4. **Urge** the media, in their education and information capacity, to be more involved in the fight against Female Genital Mutilation;
5. **Launch** a pressing call to governments, international institutions, non-governmental organisations and civil society organizations to take all necessary measures and support all initiatives and actions for the complete elimination of Female Genital Mutilation;
6. **Welcome** existing important decisions made in the field of the fight for the elimination of FGM, more particularly, Resolution A / RES / 53 / 117 of the United Nations General Assembly, the Additional Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, and the adoption of February 6th as International Day of Zero Tolerance to FGM;
7. **Decide** to create an African Network of Religious Leaders for the fight against Female Genital Mutilation and for Development (ARLEFED) in order to accelerate the elimination of these practices and participate in the economic and social development of the African region.

**Made in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso  
December 14th, 2005  
African Religious Leaders**

**Member States of the Inter-African Committee:**

- 1 .Angola
2. Benin
3. Burkina Faso
4. Cameroon
5. Congo
6. Cote d'Ivoire
7. Djibouti
8. Egypt
9. Ethiopia
10. Gambia
11. Ghana
12. Guinea
13. Guinea Bissau
14. Kenya
15. Liberia
16. Mali
17. Mauritania
- 18, Niger
19. Nigeria
20. Uganda
21. Central African Republic
22. Senegal
23. Sierra Leone
24. Somalia
25. Sudan
26. Tanzania
27. Chad
28. Togo

**IAC HEADQUARTERS:** Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) P.O Box 3001  
Addis Ababa Tel/fax: +251-115-51-57-93 email: [iac-https@uneca.org](mailto:iac-https@uneca.org)  
Website .[www.iac-ciaf.ch](http://www.iac-ciaf.ch)

**IAC LIAISON OFFICE** 145, Rue de Lausanne CH-1202 Geneva  
SWITZERLAND Tel. (+41-22)-7312420 / (+41-22)7320821 Fax: (+41-22)-  
7381823

[E-mail: cominter@iprolink.ch](mailto:cominter@iprolink.ch)