A Statement
Opposing Female
Genital Mutilation

October 2012
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is an extremely harmful practice with devastating health consequences for girls and women. Some girls die from blood loss or infection as a direct result of the procedure. Women who have undergone FGM are also likely to experience difficulty in childbirth.

What this statement is for: You should take this statement with you when you go abroad. You can show it to your family. This makes it clear that FGM is a serious criminal offence in the UK with a maximum penalty of 14 years in prison for anyone found guilty of the offence.
Keep this statement in your passport, purse or wallet which you carry with you all the time - especially when you go abroad.

**What is FGM:** FGM is the mutilation of the external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. It is also sometimes known as female circumcision or ‘sunna’.
UK legislation: FGM is a crime in the UK\textsuperscript{1}. Even if someone is taken overseas for the mutilation, it is still a crime in the UK if the mutilation is done by a UK national or permanent UK resident. It is also a crime if a UK national or permanent resident assists or gets a non-UK national or permanent resident to carry out the acts overseas on a UK national or permanent resident.

\textsuperscript{1} In England, Wales and Northern Ireland, the practice is illegal under the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003. In Scotland it is illegal under the Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation (Scotland) Act 2005.
Criminal Penalties: Anyone found guilty of an FGM offence - or of aiding and abetting such an offence - faces a penalty of up to 14 years in prison, a fine, or both.

Help and support: If you are in the UK and have concerns that this may happen to you or someone you know, you can speak to a teacher, doctor, school nurse, social worker, police officer or any health, educational or social care professional in confidence. They will be able to help and support you.
If you are in the UK and are concerned that you may be taken overseas for the purpose of FGM please call the police by dialling 999.

If you are abroad and require help or advice please call the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on +44 (0) 20 7008 1500
You can also access help and support from:

Childline
Tel: 0800 111 111
www.childline.org

Equality Now
(in Nairobi, Kenya and London, UK)
Tel (London): +44(0) 20-79731292
Tel (Nairobi): + 254 20- 271- 832
www.equalitynow.org
Ministerial Signatures: This statement is supported by:

Jeremy Browne MP
Minister of State for Crime Prevention, Home Office

Helen Grant MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Minister for Victims and the Courts, Ministry of Justice
Anna Soubry MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Department of Health

Edward Timpson MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (Children and Families)
This statement is also supported by the Crown Prosecution Service:

Keir Starmer QC
Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), Crown Prosecution Service (CPS)