Ministerial Sub-regional Consultation on the implementation of UNGA Resolution 69/150 banning female genital mutilation
Dakar, 26-27 April 2016

FINAL DECLARATION
We, the participants at the Ministerial Sub-regional Consultation on the implementation of UN Resolution 69/150 banning female genital mutilation, coming from the following countries: Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Togo and civil society, held in Dakar, Senegal on 26 and 27 April 2016, organised by the Ministry of Women, Family and Childhood of Senegal and No Peace Without Justice in partnership with the Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children (IAC) and the national associations COSEPRAT and La Palabre, with the political, financial and technical support of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation; the Mo Ibrahim Foundation; the Fate Foundation; the Spanish Embassy in Dakar, the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation, Spanish Cooperation in Senegal and the International and Ibero-American Foundation for Administration and Public Policies (FIIAPP); Save the Children International; White and Case; and the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights; CEDEAO and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania,

Reaffirming that female genital mutilation is a violation of human rights to which millions of girls and women have been or are at risk of being subjected, and one that affects women, men and children worldwide,

Considering that the historic adoption on 20 December 2012 at the 67th Ordinary Session of the United Nations General Assembly of Resolution 67/146, “Intensifying global efforts for the elimination of female genital mutilations”, and its renewal in December 2014 in UNGA Resolution 69/150, banning FGM worldwide, were major turning points in the struggle against this human rights violation,

Recognising the role of African States in achieving these historic steps and the on-going commitment and determination required of African States and their partners in achieving the goal of the UNGA Resolution to end FGM worldwide,

Welcoming with satisfaction the opportunity offered by this Ministerial Sub-regional Consultation for in-depth policy dialogue among the participants who represent and work within and across sectors and Ministries concerned with justice, health and women/gender,

Believing that fostering dialogue at the sub-regional level and between different sectors is crucial to enhance the work in ending FGM and to facilitate achieving that goal,

Convinced that effective implementation of the Ban on FGM requires the creation and strengthening of an environment that legitimises and facilitates the advocacy and educational work of local anti-FGM activists and women’s rights groups as well as providing tools for women and girls willing to defy the social pressures of tradition and reject FGM,

Desiring to hear the voices of victims and their representatives, and encouraging the participation in the fight against FGM and in Consultations such as this one of young people, who too often are not heard and whose views are overlooked, Believing that the policy priority shared by the countries represented at this Consultation to end FGM through implementation of the UNGA Resolution is an essential element to create an enabling environment and hence must be reflected at all levels of national and sub-regional action, no matter how big or small,
Hereby declare the following,
on strategies to implement the Ban on FGM:

1. Recognise and promote the essential role of legislation and other normative frameworks implementing the Ban on FGM through prohibiting and criminalising this violation of human rights.

2. Ensure the Ban on FGM is reflected in all sectors and at all levels, including in professional codes of conduct, continuing professional education, training and evaluation standards, to maximise the potential of the Ban to prevent FGM, to ensure a coordinated and comprehensive response that meets the needs of victims and to facilitate the collection and dissemination of data that allows for a proper assessment of both the context and the work against FGM and its impact in achieving an end to FGM.

3. Intensify cooperation at the national level between sectors and at the sub-regional level within and between sectors, to facilitate the exchange of experiences and to ensure all sectors have a clear understanding of the needs of their counterparts in different sectors and across borders to prevent FGM, respond to it effectively and allow meaningful assessment of the effectiveness and impact of this work.

4. Ensure a national response to individual cases of FGM that provides essential, integrated services to individual victims of this human rights violation free of charge, addressing their medical, psychosocial and legal needs in a coordinated and comprehensive way.

5. Ensure sufficient and explicit budgetary allocations at the local, national, sub-regional, regional and international level to the Ban on FGM in all its aspects, including prevention, response and assessment.

6. Recognise and include FGM as a form of violence against women and child abuse in all national and sub-regional legislation, agreements, policies and procedures relating to the prevention of violence against women and child abuse and dealing with it when it happens.

7. Establish a coordination and information-sharing mechanism between governments, parliaments and civil society in the sub-region to harmonise legislation, normative frameworks and national policies to prevent, respond to and allow assessment of cross-border activities concerning FGM.

8. We thank the Government of Senegal for facilitating this Sub-regional Ministerial Consultation in optimal conditions.

9. Thanking also the Italian Government for its financial support which enabled the project BanFGM and encouraging it to support the next steps, in particular the important conference foreseen in February 2017 in Rome.

10. We thank all the countries, international organisations and civil society who organised and participated in this Consultation, in particular by sending ministers and other high-level members of their delegations.

11. Congratulating and encouraging No Peace Without Justice and the Inter-African Committee for the exemplary organisation of this Consultation and their continuing effort in the fight for the elimination of FGM.

12. Request governments, civil society, parliaments and other relevant stakeholders to follow up on this Consultation to ensure dissemination of these recommendations and to monitor their implementation.