

CINE-ONU

The United Nations in partnership with the
European Union

Invites you to the screening of

"Africa Rising"

*a powerful documentary portraying the indomitable
grassroots movement to end female genital mutilation.*

on the occasion of

International Women's Day

Monday, 8 March 2010, 6:30 p.m.



The film will be followed by a panel discussion with;

- **Véronique Arnault** (Director for Multilateral Relations and Human Rights at the European Commission's Directorate-General for External Relations),
- **Elissar Sarrouh** (Director, UNIFEM Office, Brussels),
- **Sietske Steneker** (Director, UNFPA Office, Brussels),
- **Jacqui Hunt** (Director, Equality Now, London)

moderated by Afsané Bassir-Pour (Director, UNRIC)

AFRICA RISING

From the Horn of Africa to the Western shores of the sub-Saharan nations, everyday 6,000 girls are subjected to a practice called female genital mutilation or FGM. And everyday with little more than fierce determination and deep love for their communities, brave activists are leading the path against all odds to break the silence about this centuries-old tradition. Together, these women and men have created a formidable grassroots movement to end FGM. Africa Rising is an extraordinary film presenting an insightful look at the frontlines of a quiet revolution taking the African continent by storm.



Masterfully directed by Paula Heredia, Africa Rising paints an intimate portrait of courageous individuals with dignity and strength, whose passion for justice is changing the course of history. The film celebrates girls like Beatrice and Edna Kandie, sisters who fled their home after learning their father was planning to cut them, and succeeded in getting a court order of protection against him; the film also features the moving story of Fanta Camara from Mali, who despite years of suffering from injuries as a result of FGM, blossoms into a bright young woman. Other girls, however, have faced ultimate tragedy, such as Tato a teenaged anti-FGM activist who lost her life to FGM.

Covering rural stories from across the continent, Africa Rising will leave the viewer cheering for these unlikely heroes who share their conviction that ending female genital mutilation is within our reach and visible on the horizon.

About Equality Now (Producer of « Africa Rising »)



Equality Now was founded in 1992 to work for the protection and promotion of the human rights of women around the world. Working with national human rights organizations and individual activists, Equality Now documents violence and discrimination against women and mobilizes international action to support their efforts to stop these human rights abuses. Through its Women's Action Network of concerned groups and individuals around the world, Equality Now:

- distributes information about human rights violations
- takes action to protest these violations
- brings public attention to human rights violations against women

The Women's Action Network is committed to voicing a worldwide call for justice and equality for women. Issues of urgent concern to Equality Now include rape, domestic violence, reproductive rights, trafficking of women, female genital mutilation, and the denial of equal access to economic opportunity and political participation.

Human rights violations against women have historically been denied the attention and concern of international organizations, national governments, traditional human rights groups and the media. Meanwhile, hundreds of millions of girls and women around the globe continue to endure debilitating and often fatal human rights abuses.

Equality Now uses international law and United Nations mechanisms to advance the elimination of violence and discrimination against women. As a non-governmental organization with UN consultative status, Equality Now interacts in various ways with diverse UN bodies including the UN Human Rights Committee, CEDAW (Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women), and the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). Equality Now has also convened two "Arria Formula" meetings to bring peace activists from Afghanistan and the Middle East directly to the UN Security Council.



UNIFEM at Work:

International Women's Day

The [International Women's Day](#) will be observed at the United Nations on 8 March 2010. This year's theme is **"Equal Rights, Equal Opportunities: Progress for All."**

In 1977 the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution inviting Member States to proclaim a United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace — **International Women's Day** — to be observed on any day of the year in accordance with their historical and national traditions. Since then, the United Nations Organization has observed March 8th as International Women's Day. The purpose of this day is to recognize the fact that securing peace and social progress and the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms require the active participation, equality and development of women; and to acknowledge the contribution of women to the strengthening of international peace and security.

For the women of the world, the symbolism of International Women's Day has a wider meaning: It is an occasion to review how far women have come in their struggle for equality, peace and development. It is also an opportunity to unite, network and mobilize for meaningful change.

Commission on the Status of Women



15-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (2000)

In March 2010, the Commission on the Status of Women is undertaken a fifteen-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. Emphasis is placed on the sharing of experiences and good practices, with a view to overcoming remaining obstacles and new challenges, including those related to the Millennium Development Goals. Member States, representatives of non-governmental organizations and of UN entities are participating in the session.

A series of parallel events will provide additional opportunities for information exchange and networking. Ongoing national and regional review processes are feeding into the global review process. The General Assembly is expected to mark the 15th anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in a commemorative meeting during CSW.

Violence against Women – VAW

Violence against women and girls is one of the most widespread violations of human rights. It can include physical, sexual, psychological and economic abuse, and it cuts across boundaries of age, race, culture, wealth and geography. It has many manifestations — from the most universally prevalent forms of domestic and sexual violence, to harmful practices, abuse during pregnancy, so-called honour killings and other types of femicide.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

FGM refers to several types of deeply-rooted traditional cutting operations performed on women and girls. Often part of fertility or coming-of-age rituals, FGM is sometimes justified as a way to ensure chastity and genital "purity." It is estimated that more than 130 million girls and women alive today have undergone FGM, mainly in Africa and some Middle Eastern countries, and two million girls a year are at risk of mutilation. Cases of FGM have been reported in Asian countries such as India, Indonesia, Malaysia and Sri Lanka, and it is thought to be performed among some indigenous groups in Central and South America. FGM is also being practiced among immigrant communities in Europe, North America and Australia.

Through the UN Trust Fund, UNIFEM supports efforts to put an end to this form of traditional harmful practices. In Kenya, UNIFEM supported a project which involved local communities developing alternative coming-of-age rituals, such as "circumcision with words" — celebrating a young girl's entry into womanhood with words instead of genital cutting. The project forged close cooperation with circumcisers, religious leaders, and men and boys in the communities. Another project in Mali, also with support from the UN Trust Fund to Eliminate VAW, is currently working to foster dialogue and build capacities among government ministries, parliamentarians, civil society and traditional and religious leaders that can lead to changes in harmful practices and attitudes.

UNIFEM APPROACH

Say NO – UNiTE to End Violence against Women

On 25 November 2008, Say NO campaign presented more than 5 million signatures to the UN Secretary-General, demonstrating public support to make ending VAW a top priority for governments everywhere. The second phase of Say NO was launched in November 2009. This second phase of the campaign is a global call for action on ending VAW and girls. It is presented by UNIFEM as a contribution to advance the objectives of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's campaign *UNiTE to End Violence against Women* through social mobilization. Say NO - UNiTE to End Violence against Women is an expanding global coalition of individuals, organizations, governments and the private sector to realize a vision that is ambitious, but must never be impossible – a future that is free from violence against women and girls.

UN Trust Fund

The UN Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate VAW – UN Trust Fund was established by UN General Assembly resolution 50/166 in 1996 and is managed by UNIFEM on behalf of the UN system. The UN Trust Fund is the only multilateral grant-making mechanism exclusively devoted to supporting local and national efforts to end violence against women and girls.

The UN Trust Fund supports the UN Secretary-General's UNiTE to End Violence against Women campaign. UNiTE brings together a host of UN agencies and organizations and galvanizes action across the UN system to prevent and eliminate violence against women in all its forms. Specifically, the UN Trust Fund contributes to implementation of the five key outcomes declared in the campaign's Framework for Action: the enforcement of national laws, the implementation of multi-sectoral action plans, support to data collection systems, the creation of social mobilization and prevention strategies, and addressing sexual violence in conflict situations. UN Trust Fund grants are decided collectively in an open and competitive selection process by a consultative committee consisting of representatives of UN agencies, NGOs and other experts.



The United Nations Regional Information Centre for Western Europe would like to thank you kindly for attending today's CINE-ONU.

If you received the invitation through a friend and would like to stay informed on similar events, you send an e-mail to cine-onu@unric.org for your e-mail to be added on our mailing list. We look forward to welcoming you to one of our next events!

13th of April 2010: UNRIC and One World: Good Fortune (L. Van Soest, 73 min.)

14th of April 2010: CINE-ONU: The Fixer: The Taking of Ajmal Naqshbandi (I. Olds, 84 min.)