

UK Intersex NGO Coalition: Oral Statement CEDAW72 PSWG, 23.07.18
StopIGM.org • IntersexUK • The UK Intersex Association
Daniela Truffer

Thank you.

I'm an intersex person and survivor of intersex genital mutilation, speaking for the Intersex Coalition on article 5, harmful practices on intersex children.¹

As shown in our Joint NGO report², all typical IGM forms remain state-sponsored in all 4 nations, promoted, facilitated and paid for by the public National Health Service (NHS).³

Children with so-called “ambiguous” genitalia continue to be submitted to partial clitoris amputation, “vaginoplasty”, sterilising procedures, masculinising surgery etc., resulting in lifelong severe pain and suffering.⁴

As an NHS surgeon says, “[...] we remain happy to undertake clitoral reduction surgery [...] Until such time as there is a change in the law, parents will continue to have the right to decide [...]”⁵

CRC⁶ recognised IGM in the UK as a harmful practice in 2015, seconded by CRPD⁷ ⁸ in 2017. However, to this day the Government fails to act.

To this day, the UK denies these serious human rights violations, but tries to misrepresent IGM as a “health care” or “gender identity” issue instead. This misrepresentation is also evident in the State report.⁹

We therefore respectfully ask the Committee to raise intersex genital mutilation in the List of Issues under art. 5 and harmful practices.¹⁰

Thank you.

1 CEDAW/C/FRA/CO/7-8, paras 18e-f + 19e-f; CEDAW/C/CHE/CO/4-5, paras 24-25, 38-39; CEDAW/C/NLD/CO/6, paras 21-22, 23-24; CEDAW/C/DEU/CO/7-8, paras 23-24; CEDAW/C/IRL/CO/6-7, paras 24-25; CEDAW/C/CHL/CO/7, paras 22-23, 12(d)-13(d), 14(d)-15(d); CEDAW/C/LUX/CO/6-7, paras 27b-c + 28b-c; CRC/C/CHE/CO/2-4, paras 42-43; CRC/C/CHL/CO/4-5, paras 48-49; CRC/C/FRA/CO/5, paras 47-48; CRC/C/IRL/CO/3-4, paras 39-40; CRC/C/NPL/CO/3-5, paras 41-42; CRC/C/GBR/CO/5, paras 46-47; CRC/C/NZL/CO/5, paras 25 + 15; CRC/C/ZAF/CO/2, paras 39-40 + 23-24; CRC/C/DNK/CO/5, paras 24+12; CRC/C/ESP/CO/5-6, para 24; CRC/C/ARG/CO/5-6, para 26

2 <http://intersex.shadowreport.org/public/2018-CEDAW-PSWG-UK-NGO-Coalition-Intersex-IGM.pdf>

3 Ibid., p. 11-17

4 UK gynaecologists and psychologists following-up on adolescent and adult IGM survivors have continuously reported impairment or loss of sexual sensation, painful scars etc., see e.g. Naomi S. Crouch, Lih Mei Liao, Christopher R. J. Woodhouse, Gerard S. Conway, Sarah M. Creighton, “Sexual Function and Genital Sensitivity Following Feminizing Genitoplasty for Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia”, J Urol 2008 Feb; 179(2):634-8: **“Genital sensitivity is impaired in areas where feminizing genital surgery had been done and impairment to sensitivity are linearly related to difficulties in sexual function.”** See also Intersex Coalition NGO Report, p. 17

5 Dr Imran Mushtaq (Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Foundation Trust / Senior Lecturer Institute of Child Health, London), “Surgery in infants and children with DSD”, see Intersex Coalition NGO Report, p. 15

6 CRC/C/GBR/CO/5, paras 46-47

7 CRPD/C/GBR/CO/1, paras 10(a)-11(a)

8 CRPD18: **“You answered on female genital mutilation, but I was talking about intersex genital mutilation”**, <http://stop.genitalmutilation.org/post/You-answered-on-female-genital-mutilation%2C-but-I-was-talking-about-intersex-genital-mutilation-CRPD18>

9 The UK State report only mentions intersex under “Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Equality” and merely in the context of “sexual orientation and gender identity equality” and “gender recognition law” (para 29).

10 **Suggested Questions**, see Intersex Coalition NGO Report, p. 5