

## Intersex NGO Coalition: Oral Statement CRC80 PSWG Italy, 06.06.2018

StopIGM.org • Claudia Balsamo • Intersexioni • Intersex Esiste

Daniela Truffer

Thank you.

I'm an intersex person and survivor of involuntary sterilising procedures and genital surgery, and co-founder of StopIGM.org. I am presenting this statement on behalf of our Italian co-rapporteur and fellow IGM survivor Claudia Balsamo who can't be here today due to work obligations.

I'd like to start with a symptomatic quote from an interview with an Italian paediatric urologist conducted for a forthcoming study on intersex human rights in Italy presented yesterday at a conference at the University of Bologna:

*"I carry out a large number of genitoplasty operations [that is partial clitoris amputation and vaginoplasty] when the children are no more than one year old...then before menarche we run a check in the operating room and if there is a vaginal tightening we re-operate. This is so the girl feels alright, instead of waiting and saying 'well if she starts being sexually active then we'll perform surgery...'"*<sup>1</sup>

As substantiated in our thematic NGO report,<sup>2</sup> in Italy all forms of Intersex Genital Mutilation persist, practiced in public University children's hospitals with impunity, directly financed by the State party via the Italian National Health Service, and enforced by Italian courts punishing parents and doctors refusing IGM.<sup>3</sup> In contrast, IGM survivors are denied access to redress and justice, despite the severe physical and mental pain and suffering caused by the practice, which I can confirm from personal interactions with Italian peers and their parents.

The persistence of IGM in Italian clinics is a matter of public record, as is the criticism of persons concerned and their organisations, also to Government bodies including the Ministry of Health and the Italian Senate. In addition, CRPD<sup>4</sup> has already considered IGM practices in Italy as a serious human rights violation. Nonetheless, the Italian Government still refuses to take any appropriate action to protect intersex children.

This Committee has repeatedly considered IGM as a harmful practice, and the CRC/CEDAW Joint General Comment on harmful practices as applicable.

We therefore would like to urge the Task Force to raise IGM and the complicity of the State party in the List of Issues.

Thank you.

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1 Daniela Crocetti, Surya Monro, Tray Yeadon-Lee (University of Huddersfield): "Intersex Human Rights, Citizenship and Democracy: Project overview", presentation at the "Intersex Social Sciences: Activism, Human Rights, and Citizenship" conference, Bologna 4-5 June 2018, slide 10.

See [https://research.hud.ac.uk/institutes-centres/ccid/projects/intersex-dsd\\_human\\_rights/](https://research.hud.ac.uk/institutes-centres/ccid/projects/intersex-dsd_human_rights/)

2 <http://intersex.shadowreport.org/public/2018-CRC-PSWG-Italy-NGO-Zwischengeschlecht-Intersex-IGM.pdf>

3 Trib. Potenza, 29 July 1993; Trib. Bari, sez. III, 25 June 2012, n. 2295; see NGO Report, p. 11-12

4 CRPD/C/ITA/CO/1, paras 45-46