

Christian Aid Worker Killed

A Taliban spokesman said the woman killed in Afghanistan was targeted for preaching Christianity.



[] A Christian aid worker was shot dead in Kabul, Afghanistan, Monday on her way to work. A Taliban spokesman told the Associated Press (AP) the woman was targeted because she was spreading Christianity.

“This woman came to Afghanistan to teach Christianity to the people of Afghanistan,” spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid told the AP. “Our [leaders] issued a decree to kill this woman. This morning our people killed her in Kabul.”

A dual South African and British citizen, Gail Williams, 34, had worked with SERVE Afghanistan for two years, assisting special-needs students in Kandahar and Kabul, where she moved recently because it was believed to be safer.

Williams died almost immediately after two men on a motorcycle shot her in the body and leg, Interior Ministry spokesman Zemer Bashary told the AP. The men fled the scene, but the Taliban took responsibility for the attack. Williams’ body was taken to a hospital and her next of kin were notified.

A representative from Britain-based SERVE—Serving Emergency Relief and Vocational Enterprises—said its workers were not evangelizing. According to its Web site, the organization exists to “express God’s love and bring hope by serving the people of Afghanistan, especially the needy, as we seek to address personal, social and environmental needs.”

In a statement posted on its Web site, SERVE said Williams was “a person who always loved the Afghans and was dedicated to serving those who are disabled. Needless to say we are all in shock.”

“Gayle will be remembered as one of the inspiring people of

the world who truly put others before herself,” read a post at the site. “She was killed violently while caring for the most forgotten people in the world; the poor and the disabled. She herself would not regret taking the risk of working in Afghanistan. She was where she wanted to be—holding out a helping hand to those in need.”

In recent months, Taliban insurgents have increasingly targeted aid workers in an attempt to spread fear and undermine support for the Afghan government. In August, Taliban insurgents killed three female aid workers and their Afghan driver outside Kabul in the bloodiest single attack on humanitarian workers in recent years, the *Telegraph* reported.