

Sudan Official Promises to 'Free' Christian Woman on Death Row – Do They Mean It?

There are conflicting reports that Sudan may be poised to free Meriam Ibrahim, the Christian mother of two young American children who is on death row for her faith. It is critical that we continue to pressure Sudan to follow through and actually release this woman whose only "crime" is her Christian faith.

BBC News is reporting that Abdullahi Alzareg, an under-secretary of Sudan's foreign ministry, stated that Sudan is set "to free" Meriam in the coming days.

There are conflicting reports that this "release" may be only temporary to allow her to nurse her newborn American baby girl for two years before then executing her.

Meriam must be released immediately and unconditionally. A temporary release would be no release at all.

While we are encouraged by the fact that Sudan is listening to international pressure and may be willing to free her, we cannot let up pressure until she is free and she and her American children are safely in the U.S. with her husband. While cautiously optimistic, we must remain vigilant.

As Meriam's Sudanese attorneys said:

"It's a statement to silence the international media. . . . This is what the government does. We will not believe that she is being freed until she walks out of the prison. . . . If they were to release her, the announcement would come from the appeal court, and not from the ministry of foreign affairs. But at least it shows our campaign to free Meriam is

rattling them. We must keep up the pressure."

Sudan is clearly wavering. Now, more than ever, we must raise our voices for Meriam's freedom. Until Meriam is free, completely free, we cannot let up.

In less than two weeks, over 300,000 people have signed the ACLJ's petition for her freedom at . Sudan is listening. Sign the petition and demand her freedom today.

It is also important that the U.S. State Department be ready to grant Meriam asylum immediately upon her release. She will not truly be free, her American children will not be safe, until she is safely on U.S. soil.

We are continuing to fight for Meriam's freedom and will bring you updates as more information becomes available.