

UK Denies Entry to Christian MP Convicted of Hate Speech

Finnish Parliament Member Päivi Räsänen says she has been banned from traveling to the UK after the British government revoked her electronic travel authorization (ETA), after first approving it.

Finland's Supreme Court earlier this year upheld a conviction against the former Finnish interior minister and doctor on a hate speech charge related to her public statements on marriage and sexuality, accused of "making and keeping available to the public a text that insults a group."

The high court did acquit her on a separate charge of tweeting a Bible verse, but it found her guilty of "insult" for the two-decade-old pamphlet.



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Räsänen says the ruling has affected her ability to travel and participate in meetings and conferences. She also expressed concern that the ruling has left many people uncertain about whether peacefully expressing their religious beliefs could expose them to legal consequences.

Evangelist Franklin Graham called the travel ban "hard to believe."

"Finnish Member of Parliament and Christian @PaiviRasanen has been banned from flying through London's Heathrow airport simply for her belief on biblical sexuality. She has been persecuted for many years in her home country and accused of 'hate speech' simply for quoting what the Bible says about homosexual sin," Graham posted.

Räsänen had been invited to speak at a conference on freedom of expression and religion in Belfast at the Northern Ireland Assembly.

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