

Meriam, Disabled Husband, Toddler and Infant Re-Arrested for ‘National Security Concerns’ in Sudan

International Christian Concern (ICC) has learned that Meriam Yahia Ibrahim, her husband, Daniel Wani and two children were arrested at a Khartoum airport earlier this morning. The arrest follows Ibrahim's court-ordered release from prison and acquittal of charges of adultery and apostasy just yesterday.

Ibrahim, a 27-year-old mother of two and wife of a United States (U.S.) citizen, was sentenced to death for her Christian faith on May 15 by the El Haj Yousif Public Order Court in Khartoum. Ibrahim's case was filed with the Khartoum Court of Appeals on May 22, which ordered her full acquittal and immediate release from the Omdurman Federal Women's Prison, where she and her two children, 22-month-old Martin, and 4-week-old Maya, had been held for 126 days. In speaking with a member of Ibrahim's legal defense this morning, ICC learned that Meriam, Daniel and their two children were arrested for "national security concerns" by members of the Sudanese military.

According to that same defense lawyer, the Ibrahims were, at the time of this release, being held at a "National Security Office." In speaking with ICC, Ibrahim's defense expressed great concern over the situation, repeatedly stating that "no one can do anything." The defense explained that no legal mechanism exists by which to intervene on the Ibrahims' behalf. Some ICC sources also reported that the Ibrahims' legal defense have been threatened with arrest by Sudanese authorities. Though the Ibrahims' legal defense did not confirm the destination the Ibrahims were scheduled to fly to,

the BBC has reported that Daniel stated his intention Monday to "leave for the U.S."

Unconfirmed reports, however, have speculated that the family was on its way to South Sudan, Daniel's home country.

ICC's Regional Manager for Africa, Cameron Thomas, said, "We are deeply concerned by Meriam, Daniel, Martin and Maya's arrest this morning at the hands of military personnel. The implication that an educated mother, debilitated father, toddler and infant pose a national security concern is absolutely absurd. Just yesterday, a Sudanese court not only released Meriam and her children, but acquitted her of all charges, dropped all imposed sentences and recognized as legal her marriage to Daniel, which had previously been annulled by a lower court. For the Sudanese State to violate not only its interim constitution, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the African Charter for Human and People's Rights and now a decision by one of the highest courts in its allegedly independent judiciary is inexcusable. In arresting Meriam and her family this morning, the al-Bashir Regime has once again confirmed its commitment to the violation, not the protection, of human rights and religious freedom, and the international community must respond immediately."