

Meriam Ibrahim Arrives Home: Her Lawyer's Joy-Filled Reaction

International Christian Concern (ICC) has learned that Meriam Yahia Ibrahim, her 22-month-old son, Martin, and 4-week-old daughter, Maya, from the Omdurman Federal Women's Prison have been released per an order issued by the Khartoum Court of Appeals. Ibrahim, a 27-year-old doctor and wife to American citizen Daniel Wani, was sentenced to 100 lashes for adultery and death by hanging for apostasy on May 15, following her initial detention on February 17.

Ibrahim's legal defense filed their client's case with the Khartoum Court of Appeals on May 22. The court formally convened a committee to deliberate on Ibrahim's appeal on June 1. The decision, delivered Monday, June 23, was issued later than expected by the defense. According to state media, the Court of Appeals ordered Ibrahim and her children be released and all charges filed against Ibrahim be dropped earlier this morning.

SUNA, a state-sponsored radio broadcast in Sudan, reported that "the appeal court ordered the release of Meriam Yahia and the cancellation of the (previous) court ruling."

In speaking with International Christian Concern (ICC) this morning, Thabit Elzubir, a member of Ibrahim's legal defense, said, "[Meriam] has been released, she is out now and with her husband." Elzubir reported that Ibrahim, her children and husband have returned safely to their south Khartoum home.

Though he did not make their intentions clear, Elzubir told ICC that the Ibrahims "may want to travel, but not right now." Elzubir, who appeared overwhelmed with joy over the day's proceedings, said, "Thank you so much for all of your

support.”

The acquittal comes 10 days after protests co-hosted by ICC at the White House and Sudanese Embassy in Washington, D.C. called for Meriam’s release. On Thursday, 38 members of the United States House of Representatives wrote to Secretary of State John Kerry, asking him to further prioritize the case. Over the course of Ibrahim’s detention, more than a million signatures calling for her release were gathered across the globe.

ICC’s Regional Manager for Africa, Cameron Thomas, said, “We are incredibly pleased to hear that Meriam and her children have been released from the prison and are safe at home with their husband and father. For 126 days, Meriam and her son, Martin, suffered arbitrary detention for her Christian faith. Now that has come to an end, but the fight for the respect of religious freedom and human rights in Sudan has not. The government of Sudan still needs to be held accountable for the gross violation of Meriam’s and her children’s rights. No mother should be forced to birth in shackles, and no father should be barred from witnessing his daughter’s birth for practicing their faith. Furthermore, the matter of the Ibrahims’ future needs to be settled. It’s our job now to ensure the United States and international community provide the next steps necessary to ensure the Ibrahims’ long-term safety.”