

Verdict in Iranian Pastor's Death Sentence Expected Soon

In the next 20 days a ruling is expected in the case against an Iranian Full Gospel pastor facing the death penalty for not denying his faith in Christ.

Pastor Youcef Nadarkhani's case has gone before Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, and Nadarkhani's lawyer believes a decision could come in the next few weeks.

The pastor, who was imprisoned in 2009 for refusing to require his son to study the Quran, received international attention after he was charged with apostasy. Eighty-nine members of Congress, on both sides of the aisle, have sent letters calling on Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to insist the U.N. step in. And the American Center for Law and Justice has sent Clinton a petition signed by 178,000 people calling for the Iranian government to release the pastor.

Todd Nettleton with Voice of the Martyrs said that a fulfillment of an apostasy sentence would be rare. "In the last 20 years, no Christian has been executed by the state for apostasy," Nettleton said according to Mission Network News. "So, it's rare that we have a verdict and that the sentence is actually carried out."