

What You Can Do to Stop Sudan From Hanging a Christian Mother for Her Faith

Meriam Ibrahim lived a relatively peaceful life amid the perpetual tumult that has plagued Sudan over the course of its modern history. In the mere decades following its independence from colonial rule in 1957, Sudan has suffered two tragic civil wars; the first lasted 18 years and saw to the death of more than half a million people, 400,000 of whom were civilians.

Sadly, the history of that first conflict has largely determined Sudan's seemingly unbreakable pattern of dramatic rises to power followed by crushing betrayals followed by violent reprisals—a pattern that has not only lead to the current-day reign of Sudan's ruling regime but that is exemplified in the country's criminal dictator, Omar al-Bashir.

Having usurped power from then-Prime Minister Sadiq al-Madhi, al-Bashir has increasingly tightened his relentless grip of power over the nation's affairs, committing gross human rights violations, including crimes against humanity (especially in the Darfur conflict, which has claimed as many as 461,000 innocent lives and displaced 2.5 million more, according to the United Human Rights Council), sponsoring extreme Islamist ideologies and implementing discriminatory and sectarian Islamization and Arabization policies.

Having harbored terrorists and terrorist organizations, including Osama bin Laden and al-Qaida, Khartoum, under al-Bashir, has changed from the "Paris of 1960s Africa" to an Islamist stronghold bent on enforcing Shariah law and eliminating the city's, and eventually the nation's, Christian

populations. Adopting a public order criminal code in 1991, under the counsel of Hassan al-Turabi, a famed Sunni radical who has been referred to as Islam's "Pope of terrorism," the al-Bashir regime has committed itself to public floggings, amputations and even executions by crucifixion.

In order to enforce its public order criminal code, Sudan has established a special police force and court system and police force to arrest, detain, try and eventually punish violators. It was this special police force that arrested and arbitrarily detained Ibrahim, an innocent Christian mother pregnant with her second child, on Feb. 17, 2014.

At age 6, Ibrahim's Muslim father left her family permanently, freeing her mother to raise Ibrahim as an Orthodox Christian. A Khartoum University graduate and licensed medical doctor, Ibrahim later married Daniel Wani, a South Sudanese Christian and United States citizen.

About a year and a half later, Ibrahim gave birth to their first son, Martin, now 20 months old, who was arrested and arbitrarily detained with his mother. They now languish together in federal prison for Ibrahim's faith in Christ and faithful marriage to her legal husband.

As a Sudanese national, Ibrahim is considered a Muslim by birth. And according to the public order criminal code, Muslim women cannot legally marry a man of any religion other than Islam, and no Muslim, regardless of gender, age or creed, can choose to leave Islam. Choosing to leave Islam is considered apostasy, and the price for an apostate is always the same: death.

Charged with adultery and apostasy by the El Haj Yousif Public Order Court in Khartoum on March 4 and convicted of those same charges on March 11, Ibrahim now faces 100 lashes and a death sentence. That is, unless Ibrahim chooses to deny her Christian faith in court and publicly accept Islam, the

religion prescribed to her by birth, in which case she would only be sentenced to 100 lashes for her “adulterous” marriage.

And so, Ibrahim has been left with a choice that no free, dignified human being should ever have to face: succumb to forceful conversion and be spared, or exercise her right to freedom of conscience, to stand strong in her faith and, as consequence, to be put to death for believing in the death and resurrection of her Savior.

What You Can Do

Join International Christian Concern (ICC) in dedicating your social media to speak out #ForMeriam.

Join ICC in calling on Sudan’s embassies around the world to demand Ibrahim’s immediate and unconditional release:

United States 202 338 8565	United Kingdom +44 20 7839 8080	Canada +1 613 235 4000
Belgium +32 2 647 9494	Germany +49 30 8906980	France +33 1 4225 5571

Should you experience issues in reaching your embassy by phone, please feel free to write your embassy’s staff using their contact form on their respective site or by mailing them at the addresses provided below the template. We’ve provided a template below, which you can feel free to copy and paste or modify, or you can draft your message in your own words to respectfully explain to the government of Sudan why you believe Meriam should be set free:

Dear Embassy Representative,

Let me first thank you for taking note of my email.

I would like to bring the attention of the government of Sudan the case of Meriam Yahia Ibrahim, a Christian mother eight months pregnant with her second child. She is a Sudanese national, University of Khartoum graduate, licensed medical

professional, caring mother and faithful wife to her husband, a United States citizen.

On 17 February, public order officials in Khartoum arrested and arbitrarily detained Meriam and her 20-month-old son, in violation of her human right to a fair and public trial, according to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), to which Sudan is party.

On 4 March, the El Haj Yousif Public Order Court in Khartoum handed down charges of adultery and apostasy to Meriam for legally marrying a professed Christian and for expressing her Christian faith, in violation of her human right to the free practice of religion, according to the ICCPR. to which Sudan is party.

On May 11, that same court convicted Meriam on charges of adultery and apostasy, punishable by 100 lashes and death respectively, according to Sudan's 1991 Public Order Criminal Code. Today, 15 May, Meriam will be subjected to calls by the Sudan Fatwa Council that she convert to Islam or be placed before the court once again for the handing down of the above sentences.

As such, I write your embassy today to respectfully ask the government of Sudan immediately and unconditionally release Meriam, dropping all charges and foregoing all sentences, so that she and her children, born and unborn, may return to their husband and father.

Thank you once again for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

United States 2210 Massachusetts Ave NW Washington, DC 20008	United Kingdom 3 Cleveland Row, St James London SW1A 1DD	Canada 354 Stewart St Ottawa, Ontario
Belgium Ave Franklin Roosevelt 124 1050 Brussels	Germany Kurfürstendamm 151 10709 Berlin	France 11 Rue Alfred Dehodencq 75016 Paris

This article originally appeared on .