



Sudan Faces International Pressure to Release Pregnant Woman Sentenced to Death

An Islamic court sentenced Meriam, 27, to be flogged for adultery for marrying a Christian man and to be hanged to death for refusing to renounce her Christian faith. Meriam is currently eight months pregnant with her second child, and has been imprisoned along with her 20-month old toddler since February. There are growing concerns about the health of her unborn baby.

Meriam is married to Daniel Wani, an American citizen who has ties to New Hampshire. Meriam was reportedly born to a Sudanese Muslim father and was raised as a Christian by her Ethiopian Orthodox mother.

[For three months, the young Christian wife — now almost eight and a half months pregnant — has been shackled in a Sudanese prison on death row.](#) Authorities, who refuse to recognize her marriage to a Christian man, have sentenced her to 100 lashes for adultery and execution for her faith.

Her frantic husband, who continues to plead with the U.S. Embassy for help, flew from New England to Khartoum to visit his wife, Meriam Ibrahim — and was beside himself to find her [bound up](#) and swollen. For now, authorities refuse to release his son to Daniel, because of his faith. Although the court gave Meriam days to recant her Christianity, she refused, saying, “I am a Christian, and I will remain a Christian.”

[SIGN THE PETITION! Save Meriam Ibrahim, Don't Hang her to Death for Her Faith](#)

Now, [as the London Guardian newspaper reports](#), Sudan is facing heavy international criticism.

Governments, the UN and human rights groups have called on the Sudanese government to immediately release Meriam Yahya Ibrahim, 27, and overturn both her death sentence and sentence of 100 lashes. More than 100,000 people have backed a call by Amnesty International to release Ibrahim.

Her lawyers have lodged an appeal against the sentence, which may be heard in Khartoum this week.

Ibrahim has been told that her execution will be deferred for two years to allow her to deliver and then wean her baby.

Her husband, Daniel Wani, who left Sudan for the US in 1998, has travelled to Khartoum to try to secure the release of his wife and son. He said Ibrahim was being denied medical treatment and he had not been allowed to visit her or Martin, according to media reports.

The Sudanese authorities have reportedly refused to release the child to his father's care because of his Christian faith.

The UK government has summoned Sudan's chargé d'affaires in London to the Foreign Office to hear its “deep concern”.



In a statement, Foreign Office minister Mark Simmonds said: “This barbaric sentence highlights the stark divide between the practices of the Sudanese courts and the country’s international human rights obligations.” The Sudanese government must respect the right to [freedom of religion](#) or belief, he added.

US senators Kelly Ayotte and Roy Blunt have raised the case with the secretary of state, John Kerry, calling for “immediate action and full diplomatic engagement to offer Meriam political asylum and secure her and her son’s safe release”.

The department’s spokeswoman, Jen Psaki, said on Wednesday the US was “deeply disturbed” by the case and called on Khartoum to respect the right to freedom of [religion](#). The Canadian and Dutch governments have also expressed concern.

The UN has also urged Sudan to adhere to international law. “We are concerned about the physical and mental wellbeing of Ms Ibrahim, who is in her eighth month of pregnancy, and also of her 20-month-old son, who is detained with her at the Omdurman women’s prison near Khartoum, reportedly in harsh conditions,” said Rupert Colville of the UN Human Rights Office in Geneva.

Gabriel Wani, Daniel’s brother, who also lives in Manchester, New Hampshire, said Ibrahim was in poor physical shape. “Meriam is in a bad condition, she is eight months pregnant. She needs proper medical attention and she needs medical supplies. She’s bleeding and nothing is being done,” he told the [Daily Mail](#).

“She needs to eat well but she is just getting the prison food. When she had her first son it was a very difficult birth, she lost a lot of blood. She is supposed to have check ups with the doctor but it isn’t happening. We are praying for a miracle.”