

LET GOVT OF SUDAN RECIND SENTENCE ON PREGNANT MOTHER!

ECRL Moderator and General Secretary have in an open letter urged EU top officials President José Manuel Durão Barroso and Ms Catherine Ashton to demand of the Government of Sudan to recind its sentencing a pregnant woman to flogging and capital punishment because of her religious conviction, and respect their international commitments to freedom of religion or belief. See letter:

European Commission
President José Manuel Durão Barroso
European External Action Service
Ms Catherine Ashton

Zurich/Oslo 22 May, 2014

Dear
Mr Barroso
Ms Ashton

ACTION TO COUNTER SERIOUS BREACHES OF FREEDOM OF RELIGION OR BELIEF IN SUDAN

On behalf of European Council of Religious Leaders – Religions for Peace (ECRL) we, Moderator and General Secretary of ECRL express our deep concern for the repugnant act of sentencing the pregnant Sudanese mother Meriam Yahya Ibrahim to flogging and capital punishment. We entirely support your Statement issued 15 May.

European Council of Religious Leaders (ECRL) brings together around 45 European senior religious leaders from Judaism, Christianity and Islam, together with Hindus, Sikhs and Zoroastrians. ECRL is part of the global Religions for Peace network with global, regional and national expressions.

ECRL is particularly concerned with Freedom of Religion or Belief, and in its Vienna Declaration from 2013 the Council pledged itself

“To work individually and collectively for the advancement of religious freedom, understood as the freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of one’s choice, ... (and) to manifest one’s religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching”

In a July 2013 press release *“ECRL welcomes important steps being taken on EU and national levels to issue guidelines on Freedom of Religion or Belief (FORB) for their foreign missions.”*

We see the Meriam Yahya Ibrahim case as an example of Sudan’s lack of respect for international conventions and agreements that the country has signed on to. We

strongly appeal to you to mobilise EU and in particular EEAS beyond the level of statement. We urge you in line with the article 30 in the EEAS guidelines to: *“Publicly condemn the execution or killing of individuals and other acts of grave violence on the grounds of religion or belief. The EU will also consider additional sanctions, where appropriate.”* We ask you to directly call on the Government of Sudan to rescind its judgment on the Ibrahim case, and to fully respect all aspects of Freedom of Religion or Belief according to their international commitments.

Sincerely Yours

Rev.Dr. Thomas Wipf
Moderator

Mr. Stein Villumstad
General Secretary