

## **Young Woman Sentenced to Death by Stoning**

**- Sudan**

**By SIHA Network**

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On April 22<sup>nd</sup> 2012, Sudanese judge, Sami Ibrahim Shabo sentenced to death by stoning a young woman accused of adultery. The judgment was made after the first hearing and comes after an “admission of guilt” was entered following torture and brutal beatings by her brother who instigated the case. Denied legal representation in court or a translator so she could understand proceedings due process has been circumvented in this case multiple ways. Her co-accused “lover” however remains un-convicted and able to walk free.

Intisar Sharif Abdalla was accused of having a relationship and becoming pregnant by a man that wasn't her husband. Initially she and the man with whom she was accused both denied this and the case was thrown out of court. Dragged back to a different court following beatings from her brother to extract an admission, she was re-tried and found guilty by Judge, Sami Ibrahim Shabo of Ombada General Criminal Court, Khartoum state, who sentenced her to death by stoning after only one court session.

She is understood to be deeply traumatized and is without access to suitable psycho-social support. Her new-born child is also with her in prison whilst she is shackled at the ankles, struggling to nurse him. Her co-accused, having maintained his denial of adultery has therefore not been charged and now walks free.

The judgment is problematic in multiple ways least of all for the application of one of the most brutal forms of corporeal punishment. Although it comes in accordance with Article 146 of the Sudanese criminal law, Intisar had no legal representation in court, no translation; least of all the evidence of adultery was made under duress. Stoning remains a complex process even within fundamental Islamic Sharia sects and it is shocking that the decision was made so rapidly after a single court session.

The legal team brought together on behalf of has lodged an appeal against the judgment. Despite the sentence of stoning being judicially applied in the past, it has never been carried out and past sentences have been overturned. This provides some hope, but the fluidity of the Sudanese political context means that nothing can be taken for granted. Although the appeal is in process, Intisar ostensibly remains at risk of being stoned and in real terms, her life is still very much on the line.

Ultimately, the judgment demonstrates the scale of discrimination against women and girls in Sudan and the biased judgments made against them for acts which require two parties – a man and woman. The case demonstrates the strong anti-woman sentiment and harsh management of family disputes that exists within both the Sudanese judicial system and in society.

SIHA has welcomed the level of support shown by groups such as [Amnesty International](#) and [Human Rights Watch](#) and the many other human rights organisations calling for action.

We condemn the decision in its entirety and demand that Intisar is released immediately and unconditionally. We call upon the Sudan Ministry of Justice and other relevant Sudanese government bodies to investigate this case with all relevant and due process and overturn the judgment. In addition, SIHA condemns all forms of corporeal punishment but in particular, stoning as a humiliating and brutal manner of death.

We furthermore urge the African Union, The Arab League the United Nations and all women/human rights organizations and the international community to intervene to stop this act of brutality.

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