

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 21, 2014

The Honorable John Kerry
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

The Honorable Jeh Johnson
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretaries Kerry and Johnson:

We write to follow-up to a letter to Secretary Kerry dated this past Friday, May 16, regarding the urgent case of Meriam Ibrahim. As you are aware, after refusing to recant her Christian faith, Meriam was sentenced to death by hanging in a Sudanese court last week. Meriam, 27, is currently 8-months pregnant and has been imprisoned along with her 20-month-old son since February. She is the wife of U.S. Citizen Daniel Wani.

Due to the nature of this case, it is critical that there is clarity between your Departments regarding the status of the family and their previous requests for assistance from the United States. Any gaps in communication between the Departments during this time are simply unacceptable. When asked about Meriam's imprisonment and sentencing at a Monday State Department press briefing, State Department Spokesperson Jen Psaki stated that the Department of Homeland Security would have oversight over the issue of political asylum for Meriam and her son. Based on that information, we request an update on the Department of Homeland Security's involvement in the process of assisting Daniel Wani in his efforts to secure safety for his family members in the U.S.

To date, none of the statements issued by the State Department or the U.S. Embassy in Khartoum have mentioned that Daniel Wani is a U.S. Citizen, and we are concerned that questions about the citizenship of Meriam's son, Martin, and her unborn child are preventing needed high-level engagement from the Departments.

The news of Meriam's death sentence came days before reports on Tuesday, May 20, that American citizen Saeed Abedini had been beaten and taken back to prison in Iran. The U.S. must respond urgently to these grave human rights abuses. We continue to respectfully request that you, along with the Administration, utilize all resources available to secure freedom for Meriam and her son.

Sincerely,



Roy Blunt
United States Senator



Kelly Ayotte
United States Senator