

May 27, 2014

**The Honourable John Baird, P.C., M.P.**  
**Minister of Foreign Affairs**  
**125 Sussex Drive**  
**Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0G2**

**Dear Mr. Minister,**

I am writing you in my capacity as the Chairman of the Human Rights Committee of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops.

It is with great shock and concern that I have become aware of the situation of Meriam Yehya Ibrahim, the Christian Sudanese mother recently sentenced to death for "apostasy," and to 100 lashes for "adultery."

I therefore ask the Government of Canada to do whatever is possible to urge the Sudanese government to release Ms. Ibrahim and to respect the right to freedom of creed and worship, which is outlined in section 38 of Sudan's Interim Constitution, as well as in article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (to which Sudan acceded in 1986). The sentences passed against Ms. Ibrahim are neither just nor merciful, and are incompatible with the universal human rights Sudan has previously recognized.

I echo the sentiments expressed by Canada's Ambassador for Religious Freedom, Dr. Andrew Bennett, in his statement of May 15, 2014, in the hope and expectation that justice and compassion will be exercised in the expected appeal of this case.

Sincerely,

**+François Lapierre, P.M.E.**

Bishop of St-Hyacinthe, Canada

Chairman of the Human Rights Committee

cc: Mr. Osman Adam, Chargé d'Affaires

Dr. Andrew Bennett, Ambassador for Religious Freedom

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