

Date: 9 May 2018

ATT: United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Your Excellency, Dear Mr Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein:

We are addressing this letter to you as a matter of **critical urgency** in the hope of averting a gross violation of Human Rights, under International Human Rights Law, and a humanitarian tragedy.

It concerns the case of a 19 y.o. Sudanese female citizen, **Noura Hussein Hammad** - who is a **victim of Child Marriage, Forced Marriage, Rape/Marital Rape, Honour Based Violence, Gender Based Violence and Violence against Women & Children** and who is facing a **death sentence** to be issued by the Sudanese authorities on **10 May 2018** (below you can find a detailed description of Noura's case)

As women's rights defenders and human rights advocates, we monitor human rights violations closely - with specific focus on the violation of women's rights in the African region.

In line with this, we followed your successful meeting with Mr Mousa Faki Mouhhamad, the President of the African Union, on 24 April 2018 in Addis Ababa, in which a joint political commitment towards the elimination of human rights abuses in the region was established. We commend your efforts and the work done on this highly important and difficult subject.

It is our strong belief that this commitment needs to be substantiated with concrete actions and, in the context of Sudan, the *execution of a young female victim of gender based violence* is an unacceptable breach of the commitments you achieved, a regress in the eyes of international law and an irreparable damage for Sudan's and perhaps more broadly Africa's international reputation.

As women's rights organisations, we appeal to your authority to urgently contact Mr Mousa Faki Mouhhamad, to speak with him directly to facilitate the prevention of Noura Hammad's execution. We are aware that Mr Mousa Faki Mouhhamad is in a real position to take an immediate action on this matter by speaking directly to the President of Sudan, Omar al-Bashir.

We appeal directly to your authority with the clear understanding that if the president of Sudan does not immediately and directly intervene in this case, Noura will be executed, as per Sharia law in Sudan. On the contrary, if Mr Omar al-Bashir does take an immediate action, not only the life of an innocent person will be saved, but also the reputation of Sudan and the commitment of the African Union to human rights will avoid further scandal in the International community.

Following the expected sentencing of the Sudanese courts on Thursday 10 May 2018, we will be taking this case to the international and European media and authorities, to expose the atrocity committed by the state of Sudan against a powerless individual, first violated as a female child and then executed as an adult female for the very abuse she in fact suffered.

We seek your full and unconditional support to prevent this pending human rights violation and save this young woman's life.

On behalf of

Noura Hussein Hammad's Case:

BBC Arabic: https://www.facebook.com/bbcarabic/videos/10156669463010139/?hc_ref=ARRNZz8EPGJUo5PGZ1f_BO8qGt2Pe9WDu-mfg-HBIRmJjO9cQ_ickJYkmpD3fTh9CkU

English: <https://7dnews.com/article/i-will-be-executed-before-fulfilling-my-dreams>

When Noura was 15 y.o. she was forced to marry a man. First, the written arrangement between the families was done, and, as Noura turned 17 y.o. the formal marriage was set. From the onset of inter-family arrangements, Noura unequivocally rejected the marriage. She made it clear to both families, including the proposed groom, that she did NOT wish to marry him and had no plans to marry at all, as her main goal was pursuing her education. As the families persisted, to avoid the forced marriage, Noura fled to another city. However, two years later she was deceived to return by her own father on the promise that the marriage was cancelled.

In May 2017 after Noura was forced to take part in her own wedding ceremony and after she was sent on a "honeymoon" with her "husband", she refused to have sex with him for 5 days.

On the 6th day the "husband" called his brother & cousins who held Noura's arms and legs, while he raped her.

On the 7th day, as he tried to rape her again, in defence of her physical self and her dignity, Noura killed him with the knife.

After that she immediately reported herself to her family. Noura's father brought her to the police and left her there, declaring his daughter as the "shame for the family". Since then Noura has been in prison.

On 29 April 2018 Noura was found guilty of **pre-meditated murder**. Under Islamic law of Sudan, Article 130, a person guilty of murder is either executed (Qasaas) or has to pay a fine (Deeya). Noura's forced marriage, 'marital' rape, or other forms of gender-based violence against her, cannot be used as evidence to alleviate the sentence.

On 10 May 2018 the family of her "husband" will be heard in court. They demand Noura's immediate death (and made it clear they won't accept a fine, even though some organisations stepped up to pay).

Following this, the final verdict will be announced and the defence will have 15 days to appeal.

Noura, who is a **victim of child marriage, forced marriage, rape/marital rape, honour based violence and violence against women**, has no social support because her family abandoned her. She became family's "shame". Her legal defense was provided by formal legal aid.

A group of Sudanese and international activists have mobilised to work around the clock to save Noura's life. They are running a [FB Support Page](#) and launched [Avaaz Petition](#) . They mediate with lawyers, visit Noura in prison and translate letters of support.

Noura's case is significant for many reasons: Not only because she is one of the many women in a similar situation - subjected to patriarchal male violence, blamed and abandoned by community, at the mercy of religious laws, without recourse to justice. She is also one the many women who refused to submit to this violence and stood up to defend herself.

Noura's support team in Sudan: justicefornoura@yahoo.com

[FB Support Page](#) & [Avaaz Petition](#)

Twitter: #JusticeForNoura @kbegghead @sodfadaaji

Contact: daajisodfa.pr@gmail.com