

## **Youcef Nadarkhani's verdict due on Monday 10 October**



The verdict in Youcef Nadarkhani's apostasy trial is to be delivered on Monday 10 October. The news came after a group of government officials travelled from Tehran to interview Youcef yesterday (5 October). Their questions focused on the behaviour of the judges and the charges filed against him. During last week's trial, Youcef refused four times to recant his Christian faith during the court hearings.

On Tuesday (4 October), Youcef's lawyer, Mohammed Dadkhah said that Youcef "physically looks weak but emotionally his belief in Christ is keeping his spirits high".

### **DANGEROUS FALSE CLAIMS**

There has been much confusion caused by various statements issued by Iranian government officials and media sources since the end of the trial. Some reports stated that the death sentence had been annulled but this is not true and some sources close to the situation fear that such reports may have been an attempt to misinform the international community and ease the pressure on the regime.

Separately, over the past week, Iranian state media have carried reports stating that Youcef was not on trial for apostasy but rather that he was charged with "rape, security crimes and with being a Zionist and a traitor". These false claims have been widely reported in the international media. However, there is no truth to the claims and the court documents clearly show that Youcef was on trial for apostasy.

*(Present Truth Ministries, CSW)*

### **CONTACT WITH IRANIAN EMBASSY IN DUBLIN**

Earlier this week, the Department of Foreign Affairs raised Youcef's case with the Iranian Ambassador to Ireland during a meeting in which concerns were expressed about a number of human rights cases in Iran.

The Iranian Embassy contacted Church in Chains on Tuesday (4 October) to pass on a message from the Foreign Ministry in Tehran which stated that Mr Nadarkhani's case was still in process at Rasht court (the official was unable to clarify whether "in process" meant that there would be more hearings or that the judges were deliberating on a verdict) and that Mr Nadarkhani was being represented by two lawyers and had no problems. Their contact came in response to an urgent appeal letter presented by David Turner (Director, Church in Chains) to the Iranian Embassy last week calling on the Iranian government not to execute Youcef.

### **INTERNATIONAL PRESSURE**

There has been growing international pressure on Iran over the past week. The **European Union** (represented by **Poland**, which holds the rotating presidency) and the **EU High Commissioner** have expressed concern for Youcef while foreign ministers from **Austria, Britain, Germany, Italy** and **Slovakia** have made statements.

**Amnesty International** has taken up Youcef's case and there has been widespread international media coverage of Youcef's case - including **BBC, CNN, Sky News, Reuters** and **The Guardian**. Public demonstrations have been held outside Iranian embassies in a number of countries and Christian Solidarity Worldwide has facilitated the sending of 27,000 emails from campaigners to the Iranian embassy in the UK.



**PRAY... that Youcef's life will be spared and that he will continue to know the peace of the Lord in his heart at all times.**

**PRAY... that the Lord will work in the hearts of the judges and others in power in Iran so that they will respond positively to the many appeals for mercy from around the world.**

**PRAY... that the Lord will strengthen Youcef's wife, Fatemah, and sons Daniel and Joel.**