



FIGO

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF GYNECOLOGY & OBSTETRICS

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STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF GYNECOLOGY AND OBSTETRICS ("FIGO")

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The International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics (FIGO) is the only worldwide organisation that groups obstetricians and gynaecologists. It has member associations in 125 countries/territories.

FIGO is dedicated to the improvement of women's health and rights, and to the reduction of disparities in healthcare available to women and newborns, as well as to advancing the science and practice of obstetrics and gynaecology. The organisation pursues this mission through advocacy, programmatic activities, capacity strengthening of member associations, education and training.

FIGO is extremely concerned to learn of the case of Dr Meriam Yehya Ibrahim, a pregnant doctor who has been sentenced to be hanged in Sudan. We understand that her alleged "crime" is that, while she has a Muslim father, she was raised Christian and had married a Christian man from South Sudan. In addition, Dr Ibrahim is to be flogged for adultery for her marriage to a non-Muslim man.

As we represent the worldwide community of obstetricians and gynaecologists, FIGO is committed to the care of women around the world, without regard to national boundaries. We believe that obstetricians and gynaecologists have a social responsibility to promote and protect women's health and rights. As such, we cannot stand by while an expectant woman — who is also the mother to a young child — is subjected to unwarranted persecution and threat of death.

We believe that the planned Sudanese actions are a gross violation of human rights at all levels and this case requires immediate intervention to save Dr Ibrahim's life. We understand that the "Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam," issued by the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) Foreign Ministers in 1990 does not approve of this form of punishment for such an act and that the Sudanese Doctors Union has condemned such an inhuman act.

This is not a matter of religious tolerance or interpretation but, in our view, one of basic human rights.

It is important that not only should Dr Ibrahim be granted immediate freedom but also that any consideration of similar sentences in the future should be stopped.

Professor Sir Sabaratnam Arulkumaran
President