

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL PRESS RELEASE

News Flash

AI Index: AFR 44/030/2003 (Public)
News Service No: 199
28 August 2003

Nigeria: Verdict on Amina Lawal's case to be given on 25 September

Amina Lawal's appeal was heard by a Sharia appeal court in Katsina state, northern Nigeria, on 27 August 2003. The verdict was not given on the same day of the hearing of the appeal, but has been postponed until 25 September 2003. Amina Lawal was represented by a team of lawyers during this hearing.

"Unfortunately, this case keeps getting adjourned, which adds to the ordeal of Amina Lawal and her girl who have not been able so far to lead a normal life," Amnesty International said today.

Amina Lawal and her team of lawyers were present at the hearing today. The grounds on which the verdict was postponed are yet to be known.

Background

On 25 March 2003, the appeal of Amina Lawal's hearing in Katsina state, northern Nigeria was postponed until 3 June due to the unavailability of one of the judges. An Amnesty International delegation attended the session.

The subsequent postponement of the hearing of the appeal from 3 June to 27 August 2003 was again because of the lack of quorum of members of the tribunal.

Amina Lawal -- a Muslim woman -- was found guilty by a court in March 2002 after bearing a child outside marriage. Under Sharia Penal Legislation in place in several northern Nigerian states, this was sufficient for her to be convicted of the crime of adultery and summoned to appear before a Sharia tribunal to respond to a "crime" which now carries a punishment of death by stoning according to new Sharia penal legislations introduced in Nigeria in 1999.

Public Document

For more information please call Amnesty International's press office in London, UK, on +44 20 7413 5566

Amnesty International, 1 Easton St., London WC1X 0DW. web: <http://www.amnesty.org>

For latest human rights news view <http://news.amnesty.org>