



PRAY FOR PERSECUTED BROTHERS & SISTERS

Pray for the Persecuted in Turkey

Remember the prisoners as if chained with them - those who are mistreated - since you yourselves are in the Body also.

(Hebrews 13:3)

Christian Couple Face Deportation from Turkey



02/02/2021 Algeria (International Christian Concern) - Hamid, a 43-year-old Christian father of four, was arrested on January 20 for posting a cartoon of Muhammad on Facebook and received a sentencing of five years in prison. The cartoon in question was shared on his Facebook page three years ago, though authorities just charged him this year.

Hamid was taken in for questioning and was briefly allowed to return home when he was called back and spent the night in prison. He received his sentence the next morning, being charged under Article 144 of the penal code for insulting Muhammad.

A pastor of a local church commented saying, "Brother Hamid was naive in accepting this cartoon on his Facebook account. That this story goes back three years and only now it's resurfacing - it's hard to digest."

Hamid's lawyer is hopeful that they will be able to have the sentence reduced through an appeal, noting previous cases as precedent. In 2017, a Christian had his sentence reduced from five years to one year after he had shared a cartoon insulting Islam to his Facebook. In 2016, another Christian was arrested for a Facebook post that called Islam a lie and later had their sentence reduced to three years. Both were charged under Article 144.

Article 144 has been condemned by many international organizations for violating international law. In December 2019, Algeria underwent a political transition and constitutional reform which held the opportunity for the country to protect religious freedom. However, it was a missed opportunity. While Catholic churches were allowed to open, the Protestant churches which had begun to be forcefully closed in 2017 were completely closed during the pandemic.