



Free Yezidi Foundation Statement

Conviction of ISIS Member Omaima Abdi in Germany

6 October 2020

Islamic State (IS, ISIS) member Omaima Abdi has been sentenced to three and half years in jail by a German court in Hamburg on Friday, 2 October 2020. She was convicted on four criminal counts: membership in a terrorist organization, neglecting her duties as a parent, possessing illegal firearms, and aiding and abetting the enslavement of a Yezidi girl.

The Free Yezidi Foundation has consistently drawn attention to the nefarious role of female ISIS members in relation to the fourth count: the enslavement of Yezidis. We applaud the German authorities for holding this female ISIS member to account for the crimes that she has committed, and for including the atrocity of slavery as one of the criminal counts.

However, it is inescapable to note that three and a half years for such horrific offenses is an extremely lenient sentence. The enslavement of a human being is an abomination. The sexual slavery market and systematic abuse of Yezidi women by ISIS members is among the most despicable acts to have occurred since the Holocaust. This conviction is very much a welcome development, but a light sentence does not reflect the severity of the crimes. The ISIS policies of killing Yezidi men and enslaving the women as owned property were the ideological and practical cornerstones of the genocide against our people. Those convicted of participating in this genocide, including through holding 'slaves', should face severe sentences.

It is also essential to again emphasize the key role of female ISIS members. While most male ISIS members were fighting or conducting other activities, it was in many cases the female ISIS members who kept Yezidis locked in the house. And in many instances, the female ISIS members were more barbaric and vicious towards Yezidi women. Dozens of Yezidi survivors have explained to us that this was the reality. Judicial authorities must take these grave criminal acts seriously, and not excuse female ISIS members just because of their gender.

In three and a half years, once ISIS terrorist Omaima Abdi is released, she will be free to live her life again in Germany. We urge German authorities to carefully examine the scale of criminal liability for crimes and ensure that grave violations of international humanitarian law, including slavery, lead to appropriate corresponding sentences.

Finally, we applaud our friend Jenan Moussa, the journalist who discovered Omaima Abdi's phone in Syria. It should be noted that Omaima Abdi left ISIS and was living freely in Hamburg, as if nothing had happened, despite her allegiance to ISIS, her status as an ISIS member, and her experience owning a 'slave' in Syria. If her phone had not been found, she would never have been convicted for her atrocities. We believe there are hundreds or thousands of Omaima Abdis in Europe and elsewhere, but the evidence has not been found. For justice to prevail, we must never cease in our efforts to identify and bring to justice ISIS members, male or female.

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For more information or press inquiries, please contact info@freeyezidi.org