

EGYPT/SWITZERLAND: The Coptic students sentenced for allegedly insulting Islam flee to Switzerland

Agencia Fides (09.09.2016) – <http://bit.ly/2cqQ2oM> – The four Coptic students sentenced to five years in prison in February for allegedly insulting Islam in a video flee to Switzerland, where they will seek asylum.

The Egyptian Ministry of Justice had promised to reconsider the court case (see Fides 08/03/2016), but then there had been no positive developments.

The boys left Egypt in April, moving to Turkey, where they lived in hiding for five months. In early September – according to what was reported by one of them to Morning Star News – the boys, with the help of organizations engaged in the defense of human rights, obtained a special humanitarian visa and reached Switzerland.

“We are grateful to the Swiss authorities and our partners who helped us to reach Switzerland”, said Daniel Hoffman, executive director of Middle East Concern, one of the agencies involved in the expatriation of the four boys. As reported by Hoffman, Switzerland was “the first and only country” to respond positively to the request – also presented to other nations – to accommodate the boys and prevent them from having to end up in Egyptian prisons.