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## **NIGERIA: Nigeria's death-for-blasphemy laws slammed at European Parliament**

### **Nigeria's death-for-blasphemy laws slammed at European Parliament**

*– MEP Carlo Fidanza calls for overturn of Sharia-inspired blasphemy laws that violate fundamental rights of religious minorities*

*– Fidanza brings attention to Nigerian musician's appeal to the Supreme Court of Nigeria, which*

***challenges the constitutionality of the blasphemy laws under which he faces the death penalty***

ADF International(16.12.2022) – <https://bit.ly/3YGPcJ0> – While a Sufi-musician waits to hear if he'll face the death penalty for his "blasphemy" in a high-profile case at the Nigerian Supreme Court, Italian MEP Carlo Fidanza has called attention to the persecution of religious minorities internationally through the criminalisation of "blasphemy" in countries such as Nigeria.

The politician highlighted the case of musician Yahaya Sharif-Aminu, who was sentenced to death by hanging in August 2020 for posting song lyrics to WhatsApp that were deemed blasphemous.

With support from ADF International, Yahaya's case has been appealed to the Supreme Court of Nigeria, challenging the constitutionality of the Sharia-based blasphemy laws.

"We welcome the remarks of Carlo Fidanza and others calling attention to the egregious violations of fundamental rights that we are seeing in countries like Nigeria. For decades, human rights advocates have been waiting for an opportunity to overturn blasphemy laws in Nigeria and safeguard the fundamental right to freedom of speech that is protected by international law. Yahaya's case could be the catalyst for change we have been hoping for. We are supporting Yahaya's case because nobody should be persecuted for what they believe in, and as a result we hope that blasphemy laws will be eradicated in Nigeria once and for all." said Dr. Adina Portaru, Senior Counsel for ADF International in Brussels.

Watch the speech at the Plenary of the European Parliament here (Italian).

Fidanza, who serves as the Co-Chair of the European Parliament's Intergroup on Freedom of Religion and Belief and Religious Tolerance, noted that there are seven countries in the world where a person can be sentenced to death for blasphemy, including Pakistan, Iran, Afghanistan, Brunei, Mauritania, Saudi Arabia, and Nigeria.

The Member of the European Parliament called for blasphemy law in Nigeria to be overturned, calling them "contrary to the human rights of religious minorities, international law and Nigeria's commitments to its treaties."

Fidanza continued: "this would be an important signal internally, against the Islamist militias that are bloodying the country, and internationally, towards all states that use anti-blasphemy laws to target religious minorities."

For more on Yahaya's case, visit <https://adfinternational.org/nigeria-blasphemy-laws/>

**Further reading about Nigeria on HRWF website**

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