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PAKISTAN | Supreme Court Brings Rimsha Masih Case to a Close

Pakistan's Supreme Court dismissed a final attempt to reopen Rimsha Masih's blasphemy case, bringing a close to the legal proceedings on the matter on Jan. 15.

On Nov. 20, 2012, the Islamabad High Court ordered that the case against Rimsha Masih, the young Christian girl accused of blasphemy the previous August, be thrown out. Her accuser's lawyers filed an appeal against the decision last week, and this was heard Jan. 16 by a bench of three judges, including the Chief Justice himself.

The Supreme Court is the highest court in Pakistan, so the prosecution has now exhausted its appeal options.

Christian Solidarity Worldwide Chief Executive Mervyn Thomas said, "We welcome this swift decision by the Supreme Court, which is a significant one in the context of Pakistan's blasphemy law debate. It is a relief to know that this final avenue of appeal has now been closed, but attention is still needed on the safety of Rimsha's family and community, as well as prospects for further dialogue on the blasphemy laws beyond the forthcoming national election period and related political tensions."