



8.6.15

## **SUDAN | Released Clergymen Stopped at Khartoum Airport**

Rev. Yat Michael and Rev. Peter Reith were prevented from leaving Sudan. They were stopped at Khartoum Airport on Aug. 6 and informed that a travel ban issued against them on March 23 was still in force.

The South Sudanese clergymen were released from prison following a court hearing Aug. 5, during which Rev. Michael was convicted of participation in a criminal organization and Rev. Reith of breaching public peace. Both were released on time served.

The legal team representing the clergymen immediately launched an appeal for the travel ban to be revoked but was informed that the appeal would be heard Aug. 9. It is unclear whether it was the Prosecutor's Office or Sudan's National Intelligence and Security Service (NISS) that issued the ban. If it was issued by the Prosecutor's Office, it can be overturned by the courts. However, if it was issued by NISS, the appeal will be subject to NISS protocols and may be longer and more complex.

CSW's Chief Executive Mervyn Thomas said, "Yesterday Reverends Yat Michael and Peter Reith were released by the court. Now they are being prevented from leaving Sudan after many months were unnecessarily taken from them during their incarceration. We hope that this delay is down to a bureaucratic oversight and is not an official effort to prolong their suffering. We call for urgent interventions from members of the international community who have been observing the case to ensure the travel ban is lifted and that the clergymen are allowed to resume their normal lives. We also urge Sudanese officials of good will to allow these men to leave and end the ongoing harassment of Christians."