



# SAVE AFGHAN CONVERTS TO CHRISTIANITY

28th February 2011

*The World can no longer remain silent as Afghanistan denies Christians basic human rights.*

In May 2010, images of Christians worshipping and being baptised were shown on national TV in Afghanistan, triggering a frenzied anti-Christian response including public demonstrations and government threats. Abdul Sattar Khawasi, Deputy Secretary of the Afghan Lower House of Parliament, openly called in parliament for the public execution of the Afghan Christians shown in the TV programme.

A crackdown on Afghan converts to Christianity ensued: 26 people were arrested, while many others were forced to flee the country. Said Musa, a 45-year-old father of six, was among those detained. He was tortured and abused in prison, and threatened with execution for apostasy. Following an international campaign involving Barnabas Fund, Said was thankfully released in February.

But the danger for Christians in Afghanistan remains. Another convert Shoab Assadullah (23) is in prison facing the death sentence for apostasy, and there are many more converts at risk who have not received such international publicity.

So, along with others, Barnabas Fund is continuing to call – through this public petition as well as behind the scenes advocacy – for Western governments to intervene. Hundreds of Western troops have lost their lives fighting the Taliban and propping up President Hamid Karzai's government, which has made commitments to international standards of human rights. But it is not honouring these commitments and Christians in Afghanistan are being denied the universal right to freedom of religion, which includes the right to change one's faith.

