28/02/2020

Pakistani Christian woman who faced death penalty for alleged blasphemy to seek asylum in France



A Christian woman acquitted of blasphemy after spending eight years on death row in Pakistan said she is going to request asylum in France. Asia Bibi will receive a diploma next week as a Citizen of Honor of Paris, a title she was awarded in 2015.

Bibi has lived in Canada since she was released by Pakistan last year. She expressed her desire to live in France in an interview on French radio on Monday.

French President Emmanuel Macron office said authorities in the country are “ready to welcome Asia Bibi and her family in France, if this is what they wish to do.”

Bibi was convicted of blasphemy in 2009 after a quarrel with two fellow farm workers, who refused to drink from the same water container as a Christian. Five days later, the women alleged that Bibi had insulted Islam, a crime punishable by death in that country. Bibi was charged with blasphemy despite repeatedly denying the accusation. The Pakistan Supreme Court overturned her conviction last year,

and she had been in protective custody since then.