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ASIA/PAKISTAN - Asia's Bibi's lawyers: "Confidence in the retrial"

Lahore (Agenzia Fides) – Confidence in the outcome of the retrial, confidence in Pakistani justice, confidence in being able to demonstrate the complete innocence of Asia Bibi: these are the premises and impressions with which Asia Bibi's lawyers are preparing for the first hearing of the appeal process, at the High Court of Lahore, which has not yet set a date but that "could be very soon," the lawyers told Fides. Legal assistance to Asia Bibi is ensured by the commitment of the Masihi Foundation, who chose well-known professionals for the defence of the woman sentenced to death on charges of blasphemy.
In an interview with Fides, the lawyers said they were "confident in being able to demonstrate that the testimonies, upon which the prosecution's case against Asia is focused, will not stand up and are totally fabricated." They believe, therefore, "that they can prove the innocence of the woman and obtain her full acquittal." The lawyers claim "to have confidence in the impartiality and professionalism of the High Court of Lahore." The appeal process, they consider, "will be completely different from the first in the magistrates' court. The magistrates' courts are in fact subjected to political influences, pressure from Islamic fundamentalists, ie. things that do not happen in the upper echelons of justice"
According to the lawyers, the process will take approximately one year, but to ensure Asia's safety, "it would be better not to remove her from the jail in Sheikhupura, where she is currently protected in an isolation cell."
Meanwhile, in the case against Mumtaz Qadri - the murderer of the Governor of Punjab, Salmaan Taseer - the prosecutor, Saiful Malook, announced that he had left the case for lack of security and lack of clear instructions from the Government. (PA) (Agenzia Fides 4/2/2011)

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