



## **ASIA/PAKISTAN - Asia Bibi's case: the hearing is likely to be postponed**

Lahore (Agenzia Fides) - It is very likely that Asia Bibi's new hearing for the appeal process will be postponed, scheduled for Monday, April 14. This would be the umpteenth postponement, this time "for administrative reasons within the Court". This was reported to Fides Agency by the woman's lawyer, Naeem Shakir, who explained: "The first panel of two judges was dismembered by the court's administration and one of the judges was transferred. Even the second panel of judges was dissolved, and a third has not yet been appointed. I have not received any communication from the administration, but at this point (Saturday, April 12th, ed) it is very unlikely that the hearing will take place on Monday. We expect another delay of at least 10 days. Movements and transfer concerning judges fall within the full discretion of the administration of the High Court and occur routinely, for many different reasons. However, these repeated delays annoy us very much".

On the basis of experience, what could happen is that judges themselves avoid delicate and sensitive cases such as those of blasphemy, for fear of being targeted by fundamentalists. Meanwhile, Asia Bibi remains in prison in Multan, waiting for news. (PA) (Agenzia Fides 12/04/2014)