

Morocco : Child forced to marry her rapist killed herself

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16 year-old Amina Filali — raped, beaten and forced to wed her rapist — killed herself because Morocco's penal code allows a rapist to marry his underage victim. Let's end the outrage and push the government to make good on the promise to enact legislation that reforms the law and stops violence against women. Sign the petition and forward to everyone:

Days ago, 16 year-old Amina Filali, raped, beaten and forced to wed her rapist, killed herself — the only way she saw to escape the trap set for her by her rapist and the law. If we act now, we can stop this unspeakable tragedy from happening to anyone else.

Article 475 in Morocco's penal code allows a rapist to avoid prosecution and a long prison sentence by marrying his victim if she is a minor. Since 2006, the government has promised to strike this down and pass legislation prohibiting violence against women, but it hasn't happened.

Hundreds of Moroccan protestors are in the streets demanding real reform, turning up the heat on the Prime Minister and heads of other ministries, who write and sponsor bills and the international media has picked up the story. If we ramp up pressure, we can see real progress now. Sign the petition for a comprehensive law to stop violence against women, including the repeal of Article 475. When we reach 250,000 signatures, we'll work with local women's groups to deliver our call to decision-makers:

http://www.avaaz.org/en/forced_to_marry_her_rapist_b/?vl

When Amina was brutally raped, her family reported it to officials in their town of Larache. Instead of prosecuting the rapist, the court allowed him the option of marrying his victim— and Amina's family agreed to the proposal.

Now, in response to global outrage, the government has issued a statement arguing that the relationship was consensual, but that story isn't verified. Our Moroccan partners on the ground say that this is a typical government attempt to blame the victim and whitewash the issue — meanwhile the law is still on the books and now, more than ever, we need to reject Article 475. Women's groups in Morocco have long fought this, and it's time for the legislature to renounce this wretched tradition and pass real protections for women.

Outraged Moroccans are flooding social networking sites and the streets in protest. Hundreds of women staged a sit-ins in front of the Larache court and Parliament this week. Let's join in the demand that laws should protect, not trample on women's rights:

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Time and again, Avaaz members use our collective power to join with people around the globe to fight for a better world — today, let's stand together for Amina Filali and the legacy of hope that her story must leave.

More information:

Morocco protest against rape-marriage law (BBC) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-17416426>

Morocco mulls tougher line against rape-marriages (Al Jazeera)
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/africa/2012/03/20123171132404140.html>

Protesters in Morocco demand reform of rape laws after teen girl's suicide (CNN)
<http://www.cnn.com/2012/03/17/world/africa/morocco-child-rape/index.html>

Morocco: Amina's parents contradict official account, insist their daughter was raped
<http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2012/03/17/201337.html>

Global Rights report on violence against women in Morocco
http://www.globalrights.org/site/DocServer/2011-10-14_Final_Shadow_Report_to_CAT.pdf?docID=12983

P.S.

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Facebook Group Page <https://www.facebook.com/groups/188082354639954/>