

Libya upholds medics' death sentences

by UPI

TRIPOLI, Libya -- The Supreme Court of Libya in Tripoli spent six minutes Wednesday to uphold the death sentences of five Bulgarian nurses and a Palestinian doctor. The medics were first sentenced to die in May 2004 and then again in December 2006 after being found guilty of intentionally infecting 438 children in 1998 with the HIV virus, a BBC correspondent reported. Some 56 of the infected children has since died. The court also upheld the sentences for illegal alcohol production and trading and violating local moral values, the Sofia News Agency reported. The group's defense said the infections weren't deliberate but a result of poor hospital hygiene. The European Union and the United States have lobbied on behalf of leniency, as one doctor who helped identify the outbreak testified it began before the foreign medics started working at the hospital. However, the Gadhafi Foundation, which is mediating with the families and the courts, reportedly arrived at a financial settlement, which could mean the death sentences could be revoked in the near future, the BBC said.

Copyright © 2007, by United Press International. All Rights Reserved.

Libya upholds medics' death sentences by UPI