

Cyprus rape claim teenager will never be free, says mother

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The teenager covered her face as she left the court in Famagusta last week YIANNIS KOURTOGLOU/REUTERS

The British teenager at the centre of gang rape allegations in Cyprus fears that her dreams of becoming a police officer are over and that she will never be able to escape the case after tweets identifying her remain online, her mother said yesterday.

In an interview with *The Times* her mother said that the decision to convict the 19-year-old for making a false allegation would prevent her from becoming a police officer.

The woman, from Derbyshire, has five offers from universities to study criminology and policing and wanted to specialise in counterterrorism. However, the verdict last week, which [provoked a public outcry](#) in the UK and in Cyprus, would end that ambition.

Her mother told *The Times*: “She had in mind to be a police officer but she would not be accepted as she wouldn’t have ‘good faith’ if she had to give evidence in court. She wants to appeal the ruling but we’ve been told that could take [two to four years](#), so it’s difficult to know whether to continue on the policing path.”

The media have been careful not to identify the woman but Twitter initially failed to remove tweets that named her. Her mother added: “We had 30 friends reporting the tweets naming my daughter to Twitter but they said nothing could be done. When the case made international news they took them down but there are more tweets online now.”

“She sees it as a life sentence — it will always be online. She feels powerless . . . it is like she is being made to go through everything again.”

She is worried that her once “bright, bubbly, and confident” daughter will be a suicide risk if she is jailed.

Marios Matsakis, a pathologist for the defence, has told *The Times* that a report prepared by the prosecution inadvertently revealed that three of the accused Israelis had wounds consistent with committing rape.

He said: “They produced a report that showed scratches and bruises on at least three of the men. I told them that on the basis of the displayed finds, the scratches and bruises on the Israelis were caused by violence. I told them the finds were consistent with, though not proof of, rape.”

It was also reported yesterday that Mr Matsakis believed that a report into the teenager’s injuries, which found she suffered 35 bruises, was consistent with being raped.

The teenager claimed she had been pinned down and raped by a group of Israeli men and boys at a hotel in Ayia Napa in July. However, she later wrote a statement, after seven hours of questioning without a lawyer, in which she retracted her original allegations. She later claimed she had been forced to write it by a police officer.

The Cypriot government is facing mounting pressure to intervene after allegations that the trial was unfair.

Yesterday Dominic Raab, the foreign secretary, called on Cyprus to “do the right thing” and not jail the woman at her sentencing hearing tomorrow.

Campaigners from Israel are due to fly to Cyprus today to lend their support to the woman at tomorrow’s hearing.

Her mother said: “My number one priority is to get my daughter back home. She is suffering from PTSD and she can’t feel safe while she’s still here. I just don’t know what to expect on Tuesday. The judge is so unpredictable that anything can happen. The whole family is terrified for her if she is sent to jail.”

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/cyprus-rape-claim-teenager-will-never-be-free-says-mother-sb9xrrvhh>

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