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## Egyptian officials want apology for murder of Marwa Sherbini Germany and Egypt to meet over "veil martyr"



German chancellor Merkel (R) and President Mubarak to meet on sidelines of G8 summit

CAIRO (Al Arabiya)

German chancellor Angela Merkel will talk to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak about the fatal stabbing of a pregnant Egyptian woman in a German courthouse, which has prompted outrage in Egypt, her spokesman said Wednesday.

The talks will take place on Friday when African leaders join the heads of the Group of Eight (G8) industrial nations in the Italian city of L'Aquila, the chancellor's spokesman Thomas Steg told a regular briefing.

"The chancellor will meet Hosni Mubarak during the G8 and will speak to him about it on this occasion," Steg said.

Meanwhile in Egypt intellectuals and public figures called on their government to cut all ties with Germany until an official apology was given.

Criticism in Egypt has mounted as many have decried the silence of the German media about the death of 32-year-old Marwa Sherbini, who was stabbed to death by a German extremist as she went to court to testify against him.

Egyptian intellectuals accused German media of being racist against Muslims for failing to give the incident sufficient coverage and ignoring the political and religious implications it carried for Germany's Muslim community and Islamophobia in Europe.

### Response is sufficient

But the German government denied its response was low key and said it condemned the killing but failed

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to comment on the apparent silence of the media on the racist and religious implications of the crime.

Asked about Egyptians' critique, Steg said that the German government "has not been silent." He noted that the official responsible for integration of immigrants has offered her condolences to the victim's husband.

"When the (initial) report came, the background and the degree of knowledge about the assailant were not well enough substantiated and verified that a spontaneous reaction would have been possible," Steg said.

The 28-year-old Russian native Axel W. stabbed Sherbini, dubbed the "veil martyr," as she was giving evidence at an appeal hearing. Axel leapt across the courtroom and stabbed her 18 times in front of her son and her husband. She was three months pregnant.

Axel was found guilty last November of insulting and abusing the Sherbini, calling her a "terrorist" and a "whore" after she asked him to let her son sit on a swing in a playground in Dresden, eastern Germany.

Her husband, a researcher in genetic engineering, was accidentally shot by German police while trying to save his wife and is in critical condition.

"This was a horrible and outrageous act," Steg said, adding that the German government had not reacted earlier as details were hazy in the immediate aftermath of the crime.

(With AFP)