

Kenya Muslims fume at church move to convert Obama grandma

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image: [JihadWatch](#)

A Protestant church in Kenya is trying to convert US President Barack Obama's step-grandmother to Christianity against her will, a Muslim group said Monday, condemning the move as provocation.

The Seventh Day Adventist church in the western town of Kisumu had invited 87-year-old Sarah Obama -- a Muslim -- to a function on Saturday, where she was allegedly to be baptised.

According to relatives in her village of Kogelo, "Mama Sarah", as she is popularly known in the US president's paternal homeland, was surprised by the offer and declined to attend.

"I regret the attempt by the Christian religion to force her to convert," Sheikh Mohamed Khalifa, the organising secretary of the Council of Imams and Preachers of Kenya, told AFP.

"Why only her? Why not before Obama became president? Didn't they see her before he became president? We are ready to protect our religion," he said.

Said Obama, a step-brother to the US president, said the church pastors had approached Sarah Obama with news that she could become a Christian.

"Mama (Sarah) was born a Muslim and wishes to die a Muslim. The issue of conversion is neither here nor there," he said.

Khalifa denounced the move as a "provocation."

"They don't have permission from Jesus to convert someone. I challenge them to quote a verse from the Bible allowing them to convert someone," he said.

Sarah became a national celebrity when her grandson visited the country in 2006 and her modest homestead has become a tourist attraction since the former Illinois senator's November 2008 election triumph.

The Kenyan government last month declared Kogelo a protected national heritage site.

[EconomicTimes](#)

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