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Endangered Scholars Worldwide

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Endangered Scholars Worldwide

Social Research was founded by a group of scholars known as the University in Exile, refugees from Nazi Europe who found a home at the New School. In each issue we publish the names and details of scholars, researchers, and students who have been threatened or imprisoned, along with ways to offer them support. We see this effort as consistent not only with our own history as a journal but with the need to call attention to the increasing and often brutal attempts to silence our colleagues around the world.

If you are aware of a scholar or student whose case you believe we should investigate, please contact us at socres@newschool.edu.

SCHOLARS AND RESEARCHERS: NEW AND CONTINUING CASES

BAHRAIN

A Bahraini court upheld the life sentence of previously featured scholar **DR. ABDUL-JALIL AL-SINGACE**, professor of engineering at the University of Bahrain, at a High Court of Appeals hearing on September 2, 2012. He was originally sentenced to life imprisonment on June 22, 2011, on charges of training and financing a terrorist organization and was reportedly tortured during his pretrial detention. In August 2012, Dr. al-Singace was among a group of imprisoned activists who signed an open letter to prison authorities protesting several violations and restrictions placed on prisoners, including limitations on calls to family and lawyers, access to newspapers, and access to exercise in fresh air. The letter states that the protests will include a hunger strike.

Information current, to the best of our knowledge, as of September 12, 2012. Additional information and more current information about many of these cases may be available on our website at <http://www.newschool.edu/cps/endorsed-scholars/>.

Other previously featured scholars from Bahrain who remain in prison include **JALILA AL-SALMAN** and **MAHDI 'ISSA MAHDI ABU DHEEB**, both board members of the Bahrain Teachers' Association, sentenced to three and ten years, respectively, on charges of "inciting hatred against the regime" and "calling to overthrow and change the regime by force" following the group's call for a teacher strike in March 2011; and **RULA AL-SAFFER**, assistant professor at the College of Health Sciences and the head of the Bahrain Nursing Society, sentenced on September 29, 2011, to 15 years in prison.

Appeals to:

His Majesty Sheikh Hamad bin Issa
Al-Khalifa
Office of His Majesty the King
P.O. Box 555
Rifa'a Palace
Kingdom of Bahrain
Fax: +973 176 64 587

Dr. Fatima Al-Balushi
Minister of Human Rights and Social
Development, Acting Minister of Health
Ministry of Human Rights and
Development
Manama
Kingdom of Bahrain

Sheikh Khalid bin Ali Al-Khalifa
Ministry of Justice and Islamic Affairs
P.O. Box 450
Al-Manama
Bahrain
Fax: +973 175 31 284

CHINA

Scholars featured in previous issues who remain in prison in China include writer and editor **TASHI RABTEN** (pen name Te'urang), sentenced to four years' imprisonment on June 2, 2011, for his critical political writings; **LIU XIAOBO**, a human rights activist and 2011 Nobel Peace Prize laureate, held in an undisclosed location in Beijing since his arrest in December 2008 for "inciting subversion of state power"; and **GUO QUAN**, a former literature professor at Nanjing Normal University, sentenced to ten years in prison and three years of deprivation of political rights in October 2009 on charges of "inciting subversion of state power."

Appeals to:

His Excellency Hu Jintao
President of the People's Republic of
China
Zhong Nhai
Beijing 100032
People's Republic of China
Salutation: Your Excellency

Mr. Wang Shengjun
President, Supreme People's Court No. 27
Dongjiaominxiang Dongcheng District
Beijing 100745
People's Republic of China
Fax: +86 10 65292345 (c/o Ministry of
Communication)
Salutation: Dear President

Facebook group in support of Liu Xiaobo:
<<http://www.facebook.com/Free.Liu>>

IRAN

ARZHANG DAVOODI, a currently imprisoned poet, teacher, and cofounder of the pro-Western Confederation for Iranian Students (CIS), faces new charges of “enmity against” God. Davoodi has already served nine years and faces a new trial, which began in August 2012, following the distribution of an audio recording at a CIS meeting in which Davoodi, from prison, calls for “freedom and democracy.” These new charges could carry a death sentence. Davoodi was originally arrested in October 2003 and sentenced in 2005 for his participation in a documentary in which he condemned human rights abuses in Iran. Since June 27, 2012, he has not been allowed contact with his family.

Two academics and members of the Iranian Writers Association (IWA), **MANIJEH NAJM ERAGHI** and **DR. FARIBORZ RAIS DANA**, were arrested on June 3, 2012, and May 21, 2012, respectively. Both were charged for their membership in the IWA, a group that promotes writers' rights in Iran, and sentenced to one year in prison. Eraghi serves as the secretary for the IWA and specializes in translating academic works from English to Farsi, focusing primarily on feminist theory and women's rights. Dr. Rais Dana is an economist, board member of the IWA, and an outspoken critic of Iranian economic policy.

SAEED MADANI, a sociologist and member of the Nationalist-Religious Front, is currently being held in an interrogation ward of

Evin Prison without charge despite the fact that his interrogations have ended. He was arrested on January 7, 2012, and has not had access to a lawyer since that time. According to a report provided by the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran, Madani's extended detention is part of an effort to force him to confess to false accusations.

Scholars from Iran who remain in prison include **ABDOLREZA GHANBARI**, a teacher of Persian literature who was imprisoned and sentenced to death following political protests on December 27, 2009. His date of execution is unknown and his family fears his sentence could be carried out at any moment. Others still in prison include **MASSOUD SEPEHR**, a political science lecturer at Shiraz Azad University, detained without charge since his arrest on November 17, 2011; **SOHRAB RAZZAGHI**, a former faculty member and head of the Volunteer Actors Institute, an organization dedicated to research and education of activists and civil society organizers, sentenced to 20 years in prison in October 2011; seven people connected to the Baha'i Institute for Higher Education, following coordinated attacks on the Institute in May 2011, including **KAMRAN MORTEZAIE** and **VAHID MAHMOUDI**, each sentenced to five years, and **RAMIN ZIBAIE**, **MAHMOUD BADAIVAM**, **FARHAD SEDGHI**, **RIAZ SOBHANI**, and **NOUSHIN KHADEM**, each sentenced to four years; three cultural figures, all charged with "acting against national security" through supporting Kurdish opposition groups, including poet **JAMAL KHANI**, serving a two-year sentence; educator **FARHAD VAKILINIA**, serving three years; **NAEEM NAJAFI**, a student, serving four years; and Kurdish author and scholar **SAJJAD JAHANFAR**, serving one year; religious scholar **AHMAD GHABEL**, who re-entered jail on July 31, 2011, to begin a twenty-month sentence on charges of acting against the regime and national security; **SAEED LEILAZ**, a journalist and professor of economics at Shahid Beheshti University, convicted in 2009 of violating public order, planning to undermine the country's security, and insulting Iran's Supreme Leader; **DR. MOHAMMAD MALEKI**, former chancellor of Tehran University, held in Evin Prison since August 2009 on charges of "propaganda against the regime"; and **DR. MOSTAFA ALAVI**, an Iranian doctor and researcher sentenced to fifteen years in August 2008 for "plotting against the regime."

Appeals to:

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali
Khamenei
Leader of the Islamic Republic
The Office of the Supreme Leader
Shoahada Street
Qom
Islamic Republic of Iran

Ayatollah Sadeq Larijani
Howzeh Riyasat-e Qoveh Qazaiyeh (Office
of the Head of the Judiciary)
Pasteur St., Vali Asr Ave., south of Serah-e

Jomhuri
Tehran 1316814737
Islamic Republic of Iran

His Excellency Mahmoud Ahmadinejad
The Presidency
Palestine Avenue
Azerbaijan Intersection
Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran

RUSSIA

Previously featured scholars **SVYATOSLAV BOBYSHEV** and **YEVGENY AFANASYEV**, both professors at Baltic State Technical University in St. Petersburg Russia, were sentenced at a closed trial in June 2012 to 12 years in prison on charges of passing secret information to the Chinese government. They had been detained without formal charges since March 2010. The trial proceedings and verdicts have drawn criticisms from international groups as well as the Russia-based Committee for the Defense of Scientists, which condemned the prosecution of the two scientists as a “witch hunt.”

Appeals to:

Dmitry Medvedev
President of Russia
Ilinka Str, No. 23
103132, Moscow
Russia

Mr. Yuriy Chaika
General Public Prosecutor of the Russian
Federation
GSP-3, 15a B. Dimitrovka Street
125993, Moscow
Russia

SAUDI ARABIA

Previously featured scholars from Saudi Arabia who remain in prison include **DR. SA'UD MUKHTAR AL-HASHIMI**, a medical doctor and faculty member at the King Abdulaziz University, sentenced in November 2011 to 30 years in prison, which is to be followed by a 30-year travel ban; **DR.**

YUSUF AL-AHMAD, an Islamic scholar who teaches at Imam Muhammad bin Sa'ud University in Riyadh, arrested after posting a YouTube video critical of long-term detentions of security suspects without due juridical process; **NADHIR AL-MAJID**, a teacher and writer, detained on April 17, 2011, soon after the appearance of an article in which he criticized the Saudi government; and university professors **SA'UD AL-DUGHATHIR**, **MUHAMMAD BIN NASIR AL-GHAMIDI**, and **ABD AL-KARIM AL-KHADHAR**, all members of a group of nine intellectuals who drafted a party proposal seeking to create what would have been the first political party in Saudi Arabia, arrested on February 16, 2011.

Appeals to:

His Royal Highness Prince
Naif bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud
Ministry of the Interior
P.O. Box 2933
Airport Road
Riyadh 11134
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: +966 1 403 1185

His Royal Highness Prince Saud al-Faisal
bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Nasseriya Street
Riyadh 11124

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: +966 1 403 0645

Mr. Turki bin Khaled Al-Sudairy
President
Human Rights Commission
P.O. Box 58889
Riyadh 11515
King Fahad Road
Building No. 373
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: +966 1 4612061

TURKEY

Three academics are on trial and face lengthy prison sentences as a result of their involvement in a Kurdish pro-democracy group. Previously featured scholar **BÜSRA ERSANLI**, a constitutional law expert and professor of political science at Marmara University in Istanbul, has been temporarily released from prison pending a continuing trial to resume on October 1, 2012. She was released on July 13, 2012, along with 16 others after an initial hearing, although she still faces charges of “leadership of an illegal organization,” punishable under Turkey’s antiterrorism laws. Also charged and temporarily released pending

the continuation of his trial was previously featured scholar **RAGIP ZARAKOLU**, an academic and writer charged with “aiding and abetting an illegal organization.” Finally, as part of the same crackdown and set of trials, academic and translator **AYSE BERKTAY** is charged with illegal overseas involvement for her attendance at events held by the World Social Forum and the European Network for Peace and Human Rights. All three were arrested in October 2011 and face up to twenty-two and a half years in prison. Ragip Zarakolu’s son, **DENİZ ZARAKOLU**, an academic and translator, also remains in prison on similar charges.

KEMAL GÜRÜZ, past president of Turkey’s Council of Higher Education and a former university rector and retired professor at Middle East Technical University in Ankara, was arrested on June 25, 2012, and is currently being held at Sincan prison in Ankara, where he has been allowed only limited communications with his family. In late June, Gürüz, who was traveling abroad, was summoned back to Turkey by police and placed under arrest upon his return. Though official reasons have not been made public for his sudden arrest and pretrial detention, Scholars At Risk reports that it relates to his alleged involvement in the 1997 removal of the coalition government and political transition in Turkey. Professor Gürüz publicly maintains his innocence of any illegal activity.

Appeals to:

His Excellency Recep Tayyip Erdogan
Prime Minister of Turkey
Office of the Prime Minister
06573 Basbakanlik
Ankara Turkey
Fax: +90 312 417 04 76

His Excellency Sadullah Ergin
Minister of Justice
06669 Kizilay
Ankara, Turkey
Fax: +90 312 419 3370

ENDANGERED STUDENTS: NEW AND CONTINUING CASES

BAHRAIN

Previously featured students who remain in jail include student activist **AHMED AOUN**, arrested by authorities when he sought treatment at a hospital following an eye injury inflicted by police during protests on

May 13, 2012; and six students, all sentenced to 15 years in prison at a trial on March 5, 2012, as part of a crackdown on student involvement in pro-democracy demonstrations, including **JAWAD AL-MAHARY, SHAWQI RADHI, JASSIM AL HULAINI, JASSIM AL-MUKHODHER, AND YOUSIF AHMED.**

Appeals to:

His Majesty Sheikh Hamad bin Issa
Al-Khalifa
Office of His Majesty the King
P.O. Box 555
Rifa'a Palace
Kingdom of Bahrain.
Fax: +973 176 64 587

Dr. Fatima Al-Balushi
Minister of Human Rights and Social
Development, Acting Minister of Health
Ministry of Human Rights and
Development
Manama
Kingdom of Bahrain

Sheikh Khalid bin Ali Al-Khalifa
Ministry of Justice and Islamic Affairs
P.O. Box 450
Al-Manama
Bahrain
Fax: +973 175 31 284

BELARUS

ALIAKSANDER ATROSHCHANKAU, a previously featured scholar from Belarus who remains in prison, is an international law student at the European Humanities University. He was sentenced in the spring of 2011 to four years in prison on charges of inciting rioting following protests over the disputed Belarusian presidential election in December 2011.

Appeals to:

President of the Republic of Belarus
Alyaksandr G. Lukashenka
Karl Marx Str. 38
220016 g. Minsk
Belarus

Fax: +375 (172) 26 06 10 or
+375 (172) 22 38 72
Tel: +375 (172) 22 38 72
Email: pres@president.gov.by
Salutation: Dear President

BURMA (MYANMAR)

KO AUNG HTUN, a writer and former student activist, arrested in Burma in the winter of 1998, remains in prison. He was convicted of violat-

ing state censorship and engaging in unlawful association and was sentenced to 17 years' imprisonment.

Appeals to:

Senior General Than Shwe
Chairman, State Peace and Development
Council
Ministry of Defense
Naypyitaw, Union of Myanmar
(for US Postal Service, "Burma" should
appear in parentheses after "Myanmar"
on envelope only, not in the letter itself)

Salutation: Dear Senior General

Minister Counselor U Myint Lwin
Chargé d'Affaires
Ad Interim Embassy of Myanmar
2300 S Street, NW
Washington, DC 20008
Salutation: Dear Sir

IRAN

According to an August 2012 report from Scholars at Risk, 36 Iranian universities have enacted a ban forbidding Iranian women from enrolling in 77 critical subject areas, including engineering, education, and counseling. University deans in Iran have defended the decision by claiming that certain academic disciplines are unsuitable for woman due to their "manly nature." Science Minister Kamran Daneshjoo further defended the actions as part of an effort to uphold morality. The action is a clear violation of women's rights to education and exacerbates existing difficulties faced by Iranian women in finding employment and gaining mobility and self-determination.

The 10-year sentence of **OMID KOKABEE**, a PhD student in physics, was upheld in July 2012 after an appeals process. He was originally sentenced to 10 years in prison at a trial on May 12, 2012, on charges of communicating with a hostile government and taking illegal earnings. Kokabee, an Iranian citizen, was pursuing his PhD at the University of Texas at Austin and was arrested while attempting to return to the United States after a visit to Iran in February 2011. He spent 15 months in detention before his trial and reported in open letters from Evin Prison that he has not been allowed to talk with his lawyer. According to recent reports from the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran, security officials made threats

to Kokabee concerning his family that led to his signing a forced confession.

Previously featured students from Iran who remain in prison include: **MOHSEN SANATIPOUR**, a student activist and journalist, sentenced to one year in prison in spring 2012; **ABOLFAZL TABARZADI**, a civil engineering student and human rights activist, serving nine months since October 2011 after being convicted of “acting against national security” and “contact with foreign media”; student activist **JAVAD ALIKHANI**, arrested on May 28, 2010, and charged with “propagating against the regime,” “acting against national security,” “blasphemy” and “insulting the Supreme Leader”; **ABDOLLAH MOMENI**, a student activist and spokesman for Iran’s largest reformist student organization currently in Evin Prison; and **MAJID TAVAKOLI** and **BAHAREH HEDAYAT**, distinguished student activists sentenced to eight-and-a-half and nine-and-a-half years, respectively, for their involvement in antigovernment protests in 2009. All are at risk of torture and need your support.

Appeals to:

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed ‘Ali
Khamenei
The Office of the Supreme Leader
Shoahada Street

Qom
Islamic Republic of Iran

Ayatollah Sadeqh Larijani
Howzeh Riyasat-e Qoveh Qazaiyeh (Office
of the Head of the Judiciary)
Pasteur St., Vali Asr Ave., south of Serah-e

Jomhour
Tehran 1316814737
Islamic Republic of Iran

His Excellency Mahmoud Ahmadinejad
The Presidency
Palestine Avenue
Azerbaijan Intersection
Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran

OMAN

University students **MOHAMED AL-BADI** and **MONA HARDAN** were among a group of political activists handed fines and prison sentences as part of a government crackdown on freedom of expression and assembly

throughout the country in July 2012. Their charges include publicly insulting the sultan, publishing defamatory and insulting materials on the Internet, and publishing materials harming public order. They have been released on bail pending appeals and face up to a year and a half in jail.

Appeals to:

President Minister of Justice
His Excellency Sheikh Mohammad bin
Abdullah bin Zaher al-Hinai
Minister of Justice
PO Box 354, Muscat 112
Sultanate of Oman
Telegrams: Justice Minister, Muscat,
Sultanate of Oman
Fax: + 968 602 725
Salutation: Your Excellency

Minister of Interior
His Excellency Sa'ud bin Brahim
al-Busa'idi
Minister of Interior
PO Box 127, Ruwi 112

Sultanate of Oman
Telegrams: Interior Minister, Muscat,
Sultanate of Oman
Fax: + 968 693 330/602 244
Salutation: Your Excellency

Sultan of Oman
His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said
Diwan of the Royal Court
PO Box 632, Muscat 113
Sultanate of Oman
Telegrams: His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin
Said, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman
Salutation: Your Majesty

SUDAN

Police fired tear gas, rubber bullets, and live ammunition to suppress peaceful protests that began at Khartoum University on June 16, 2012. President Omar al-Bashir threatened in a speech on June 24 to confront the protestors, who are calling for an end the present government, with “with real jihadists” instead of as a “responsible government.” Many student protestors have reported beatings, not only from police but also from pro-government student groups hired by the authorities. In several cases, students have reported being beaten with sticks and having their hair and eyebrows shaved while detained by security officials. Afterward, they are forced to sign an agreement not to protest in the future before they can be released.

Appeals to:

His Excellency Lt. Omar Hassan Ahmed
Al-Bashir
President of the Republic of Sudan
President's Palace
PO Box 281
Khartoum
Sudan
Fax: +249 183 783 223/ +249 183 771 651/
+249 183 787 676

His Excellency Mohamed Boshara Dosa
Minister of Justice and Attorney General
Ministry of Justice
PO Box 302
Al Nil Avenue
Khartoum
Sudan
Fax: + 249 183 78 07 96/ +249 183 770883

YEMEN

ABDUL RAOUF HASSAN ZAIN AL-SAQQAF, a student activist at Aden University who has been arrested twice already this year and subject to torture and ill-treatment while in detention, has been threatened by authorities with future arrest, detention, and torture. Amnesty International reports that after his most recent release from prison, on August 13, 2012, he was told “this is not a complete release; you could be brought in at any time.” He is a member of the Southern Movement, known in Arabic as al-Hirak, a group founded in 1990 that calls for the peaceful separation of southern Yemen. His most recent arrest came on August 10, 2012, when he and four others participating in a Southern Movement meeting were taken into custody. He reports that during his three-day detention he was repeatedly beaten by guards, was denied the daily milk rations given to other prisoners, and was handcuffed to the bars of a cockroach-infested solitary confinement cell.

Appeals to:

His Excellency General ‘Ali ‘Abdullah
Saleh
President
Office of the President
Sana’a
Republic of Yemen
Fax: 967 127 4147
Minister of the Interior
Mutaher Rashad al Masri

Ministry of the Interior
Sana’a
Republic of Yemen
Fax: 967 1 332 511

GOOD NEWS: RELEASES

IRAN

We are happy to report that **BEHROOZ JAVID-TEHRANI**, a student activist and prisoners' rights campaigner who was sentenced to seven years in jail in 2005, was released in December 2012 after serving his full sentence.

SUDAN

MOHAMMED SALAH MOHAMMED, a student leader at the Faculty of Sciences at the University of Khartoum, spokesperson for the Student Democratic Front, and leader of a Nubian ethnic minority group in Sudan, was released from prison on August 10, 2012, following his arrested on June 24, 2012. The arrest took place shortly after nonviolent student protests in which he took part. Mohammed was detained without trial in Kober Prison, where he was at risk of abuse and did not receive access to legal counsel or to medical services for his chronic kidney disease.

SOURCES:

Amnesty International <<http://www.amnesty.org/>>

Bahrain Center for Human Rights <<http://www.bahrainrights.org/en>>

English PEN <<http://www.englishpen.org/writersinprison/>>

Human Rights in China <<http://www.hrichina.org/>>

Human Rights Watch (HRW) <<http://www.hrw.org/>>

The International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran <<http://www.iran-humanrights.org/>>

Islamic Human Rights Commission <<http://www.ihrc.org/>>

Network for Education and Academic Rights (NEAR) <<http://www.nearinternational.org/>>

Scholars at Risk (SAR) <<http://scholarsatrisk.nyu.edu/>>

—Written by Matt Congdon