

# Endangered Scholars Worldwide

*The information in this quarterly print report is current as of May 21, 2019. The situation of scholars and students around the world changes on a daily basis. For the most up-to-date information and ways in which you can be involved in calling for the freedom of endangered scholars and students, please visit us online at [www.endangeredscholarsworldwide.net](http://www.endangeredscholarsworldwide.net) or follow us at [www.facebook.com/endangeredscholars](https://www.facebook.com/endangeredscholars). In these pages we introduce new cases that have come to our attention over the past three months and provide basic information about continuing cases—a description of charges and potential or actual reported sentences. If you are aware of a scholar or student whose case you believe we should investigate, please contact us at [esw@newschool.edu](mailto:esw@newschool.edu).*



## **SPECIAL REPORT**

### **Iranian Student Prisoner Parisa Rafiee Reveals Female Political Prisoners' Suffering**

On May 9, 2019, Iranian student activist Parisa Rafiee, who is serving a seven-year sentence, published an open letter revealing the suffering of female political prisoners and prisoners of conscience in Iran. Rafiee, 22, was arrested on February 25, 2018, by Iran's Intelligence Ministry for allegedly attending the protests that swept through Tehran and other Iranian cities in December 2017 and January 2018. She was accused of "assembly and collusion against national security" and "propaganda against the Islamic Republic." Rafiee was later sentenced to seven years behind bars by Tehran's Revolutionary Court on charges of "crimes against national security," "propaganda against the regime," and "disrupting public order."

In Rafiee's letter, she wrote:

Today, nearly a year and a half after the wave of detentions in January 2018, during which hundreds of students as well as dozens of student activists and free-education activists were sentenced to flogging and imprisonment, we are still hearing the cries of student activists for justice, but the forces of suppression have not decreased their pressure and attacks in the slightest bit.... I decided to write this letter knowing full well that revealing such recollections can have dire consequences for those who make such revelations, affecting their ongoing legal and court proceedings.

But in light of the importance of defending the human rights of our student friends, journalists, and the thousands of political prisoners held in Iran, we cannot keep silent. We face a situation in which numerous dangerous restrictions, the possibility of being rearrested, and the probability of continued repression have always hindered those arrested from revealing what they lived through....

I am one of a number of independent student activists who has suffered from lack of transparency in regard to my case with justice and security officials. Regarding the virtual indifference and silence of the media and public opinion to the catastrophic situation of the political detention centers in Iran, I would like to point out two different cases of abusive acts done by the security forces during my own detention that show how the security forces, the Ministry of Intelligence officials, and IRGC intelligence division degrade and harass prisoners, particularly female detainees. The use of violence along with psychological games for the purpose of forcing political activists to confess to their alleged crimes is rampant. (We have repeatedly witnessed officials threatening political detainees with publishing their confessions.)

I hope that exposing these tactics will hinder the process of imposing these illegal and inhumane mechanisms by judicial and security forces. I hope that these revelations will help break the silence about the persecution by the repressive institutions and prevent further illegal and brutal acts and pressures on those detained on International Labor Day and Teacher's Day.

1. During my entire detention (with the exception of the last two days, when my bail was being considered), I was interrogated every single day. I spent 21 days in solitary confinement at a detention center without knowing the name of the place at which I was being held. This is one of the most practiced and serious forms of inhumane tortures that must be confronted and eradicated. In addition to the imposition of a few days to several months of solitary confinement on detainees, another issue that must be addressed is that political detainees can be transferred to and held in unidentified detention facilities during their confinement. This is a problem that, in addition to confusing the process by which relatives locate and pursue a prisoner, can have adverse psychological effects on detainees.

Political detainees, when kept unaware of their surroundings through the use of blindfolds and other security measures, are much more vulnerable to threats during interrogation, especially in cases where the interrogators only grant the accused permission to contact their loved ones if they cooperate. The prisoner is kept in a situation where she believes that no one is aware of her whereabouts—even her own lawyer—and has no way of contacting anyone to seek help and support. Independent experts and lawyers should also outline the wider dimensions of the effects of these secret detention centers so they can accurately critique and track the general status of those held there.

2. During my detention, the interrogator, with the consent of the prosecutor, sent me for virginity testing. When they were faced with my absolute resistance despite their threats and pressures, they were forced to back down. I insisted on filing a criminal complaint due to their behavior in trying to force an illegal act upon me, but they refused to accept any such complaint and said, “We did not want you to make a false claim against us.” They probably meant that they did not want me to claim that I was raped. Given that every inch of these detention centers is covered with security cameras, this claim in itself is absurd.

Such insults and pressures were not limited to the virginity testing. Through a series of letters and notes, the interrogator kept describ-

ing the place I was at and, through verbal threats of execution and having my fingernails pulled out, continuously applied psychological pressure on me. I describe these details to show that interrogators have several ways of pressuring detainees, and they continue the pressure until the point where the individual breaks down.

These inhumane and extrajudicial tactics, including all types of dehumanizing threats and humiliations, are applied to all detainees, especially those whose arrest information is not publicized.

The increase in political arrests and the overwhelming repression of women who are politically and socially active compel us to ask: what does conducting a virginity test—which concerns a completely personal matter to the arrested women—have to do with the security apparatus and the content of the interrogation? Undoubtedly, the emergence of public sensitivities to stop these acts, which are a gross harassment of female prisoners, violating their privacy and human rights, is more necessary than ever.

Please note that my emphasis on political defendants in this letter does not mean that I prioritize them over regular detainees, but rather, because of my personal experience, is because I have become more aware of their situation.

I hope and believe that the details of the inhumane conditions governing ordinary prisoners (who are forced to tolerate more depressing and inhumane conditions) should be publicized with due diligence.

Parisa Rafiee

May 9, 2019

—Translated from Persian by Ebby Abramson

## NEW AND CONTINUING CASES

### BAHRAIN

*Scholars and Researchers:* ABDUL-JALIL AL-SINGACE, 56, the former head of the Department of Engineering at the University of Bahrain, has been in Jau Prison since 2011 on a life sentence for allegedly “plotting to over-

throw the government” during the Arab Spring protests. Throughout his time in detention, Al-Singace has been subjected to torture and various other forms of mistreatment. Since March 2013, Bahraini officials have consistently ignored Al-Singace’s requests for medical attention despite his long-term poliomyelitis, which has left him paralyzed since childhood. According to a family member, Al-Singace has refused to attend medical appointments repeatedly because of the prison authorities’ insistence on shackling him during the transfer.

Whether deliberately or through indifference, Bahraini authorities are wielding the denial of adequate medical care as a weapon against their dissidents, both academic and other. ESW urges the authorities to grant Abdul-Jalil Al-Singace access to all necessary medical care as a matter of urgency, and we continue to call for his immediate and unconditional release, as well as for the release of all those detained in Bahrain in violation of Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Bahrain is party. ESW asks for letters, emails, and faxes respectfully urging authorities to reconsider any convictions related to this scholar’s peaceful exercise of free speech and association and to ensure his well-being and access to medical attention while in custody, in accordance with international human rights standards.

*Students:* ALI MOHAMED HAKEEM AL-ARAB, 23, a nursing student, was arrested on February 9, 2017, with his cousin, AHMED AL-ARAB, who is also a nursing student. Both men were consequently sentenced to death by the Fourth High Criminal Court in Bahrain on charges including, “forming and joining a ‘terrorist group.’” Ali Al-Arab, along with several other prisoners, escaped from Jau Prison on January 1, 2017, resulting in the death of a policeman. The Bahrain Ministry of Interior issued a statement in February identifying Ali Al-Arab as “the main suspect” in the police officer’s death, after being “found to be in possession of two Kalashnikov rifles and three firearms.” According to a report by Amnesty International dated March 15, 2018, security officers tortured

and mistreated the two men to force them to sign a confession. On May 6, 2019, the Court of Cassation upheld the two men's convictions and death sentences. The two remain at risk of further torture and mistreatment. The death sentences will now go to the king for ratification. In a December 2018 letter, a group of United Nations experts stated that they were "extremely concerned by allegations that confessions implicating several defendants were obtained under torture and used as evidence in court." ESW calls upon the Bahraini king to not ratify the death sentences imposed on Ali Mohamed Hakeem Al-Arab and Ahmed Al-Arab and to ensure they are not executed.

Five other students, JAWAD AL-MAHARY, SHAWQI RADHI, JASSIM AL-HULAINI, JASSIM AL-MUKHODHER, and YOUSIF AHMED, were sentenced to 15 years in prison at a trial on March 5, 2012, for their involvement in prodemocracy demonstrations. According to information received by ESW, Ahmed Auon lost his right eye when he was struck by a metal pellet fired from a police shotgun following the demonstration. The authorities at Dry Dock Detention Center, where Auon is being held, have denied him proper medical treatment.

ESW is deeply concerned about the continuous mistreatment of scholars and students in Bahrain. We call on the United States, the United Kingdom, the United Nations, the European Union, and other international institutions to put pressure on Bahraini authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Ahmed Al-Arab and all other detainees held on politically motivated charges due to the ongoing popular movement for freedom and democracy.

Please send appeals to the following:

Sheikh Hamad bin Isa Al-Khalifa

Office of the King

The Amiri Court

PO Box 555

Rifa'a Palace

Al-Manama

Kingdom of Bahrain

Fax: +973 176 64 587

Website: <http://www.mofa.gov.bh/>

Sheikh Khalid bin Abdullah Al- Khalifa

Deputy Prime Minister

Diplomatic Area

PO Box # 450

Al-Manama

Kingdom of Bahrain

Fax: +973 175 13 333

## CHINA

*Scholars and Researchers:* Since April 2017, authorities in northwest China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) have held an estimated 1.5 million Uyghurs and other Muslim ethnic minorities accused of harboring "strong religious views" and "politically incorrect" ideas in "re-education" camps, which China claims are an effective tool to protect the country from terrorism and provide vocational training. According to a new report released by the Uyghur Human Rights Project (UHRP), as of May 2, 2019, the Chinese government has interned, imprisoned, or forcibly disappeared at least 386 intellectuals, among them "an alarming 77 university professors" and 101 students, as part of its intensified assault on Uyghurs and the extermination of their culture in East Turkestan. By the publication date of the report, five deaths in custody had been confirmed, but the true number of intellectuals who have died in the camps or immediately after release is unknown due to the veil of secrecy and fear. Dozens of intellectuals are also serving harsh sentences handed down prior to April 2017.

From Xinjiang University alone, 21 people have been incarcerated in "re-education camps" that the Chinese government describes as having been set up for "vocational training" exercises. The report notes that faculty from Xinjiang University "have been a focus for the Chinese authorities given their prominence in Uyghur-produced scholarship conducted in the region."

In a previous report released in January, UHRP gave details on some of those who had disappeared, including RAHILE DAWUT, a leading expert on Uyghur folklore and traditions at Xinjiang University whose work had previously been sponsored by the Chinese State. She left Urumchi for Beijing in December 2017 and has not been heard from since.

The names of Kashgar University's president, ERKIN OMER; the vice president, MUHTER ABDUGHOPUR; and professors QURBAN OSMAN and GULNAR OBUL have been deleted from the institution's website, and their whereabouts are unknown. HALMURAT GHOPUR, the president of the

Xinjiang Food and Drug Administration’s Department of Inspection and Supervision and former president of the Xinjiang Medical University Hospital, has been detained in an undisclosed location since November 2017. Former president of Xinjiang University, TASHPOLAT TIYIP, was reportedly sentenced to death with a two-year reprieve on “separatism” charges.

ABDULQADIR JALALEDDIN, a professor, philosopher, and poet at Xinjiang Normal University, was also reported among those detained and disappeared by UHRP.

According to a report by RFA’s Uyghur Service published on May 20, 2019, detainees in “re-education camps” are given an hour or so to “cry” every two weeks, according to a young ethnic Kazakh woman who was held at one of the facilities.

Endangered Scholars Worldwide deplors the Chinese government’s pervasive and ongoing crackdown on the Uyghur people. We believe the internment of more than a million and a half Uyghurs is one of the most serious human rights violations in the world today. We urge the Chinese authorities to stop harassing the Uyghur population immediately, and we call on the Chinese government to respect, guarantee, and implement the provisions and principles of human rights as specified in international conventions and treaties, in accordance with China’s obligations under international law.

On May 9, 2019, jailed Uyghur scholar, ILHAM TOHTI, who has been in prison since September 23, 2014 following a two-day trial, was at a ceremony in Washington DC, where he was given the Freedom Award in absentia by the democracy watchdog group Freedom House. An outspoken economics professor who regularly highlighted the religious and cultural persecution of the mostly Muslim Uyghur ethnic minority in northwest China’s Xinjiang region, Tohti, 49, was arrested on charges of promoting separatism. He is now serving a life term behind bars in China. ESW is particularly concerned by reports that his wife and children have not been allowed to visit him at all since 2018. In a January 17, 2018 statement, Reporters Without Borders (RSF) described Tohti’s



situation as, “typical of the massive human rights violations taking place under [Chinese] President Xi Jinping.” The detention and imprisonment of such an important intellectual and cultural leader and voice of moderation should be seen as a major part of China’s grave repression of the Uyghurs.

*Students* who remain in prison on charges of “separatism” and their connection to Ilham Tohti are PERHAT HALMURAT, SHOHRET NIJAT, LUO YUWEI, MUTELLIP IMIN, ABDUQEYUM ABLIMIT, ATIKEN ROZI, and AKBAR IMIN.

Please send appeals to the following:

Xi Jinping  
President of the People’s Republic of  
China  
Zhong Naihui  
Beijing 100032  
People’s Republic of China

Zhou Qiang  
Chief Justice, Supreme People’s Court  
No. 27 Dong Jiao Min Xiang  
Beijing 100745  
People’s Republic of China  
Fax: +86 10 6529 2345 (c/o Ministry of  
Communication)  
Website: [www.court.gov.cn](http://www.court.gov.cn)

## IRAN

*Scholars and Researchers:* On May 18, 2019, Amnesty International urged Tehran’s Prosecutor General to allow the imprisoned Swedish-Iranian scientist AHMADREZA DJALALI to receive specialized medical care after months of suffering from serious health problems.

Djalali, 45, is a professor, physician, and researcher focused on crisis management affiliated with the Karolinska Institute near Stockholm. He was arrested in April 2016 on charges of “collaboration with a hostile government” while visiting his family in Tehran. Djalali was later accused of providing information to Israel to aid in the assassination of several senior nuclear scientists and, following a closed trial, sentenced to death on October 20, 2017. The Iranian government has disclosed no evidentiary basis for the allegations, and Djalali has denied them, declaring that his ties to the international academic community are the real reasons for his incarceration. Recent reports and interviews with Djalali’s wife indicate that his health has deteriorated in prison;

he has, for example, lost over 25 kilograms (approximately 55 pounds). Despite Djalali's poor health, however, his medical furlough request has been repeatedly denied.

In December 2018, 124 Nobel Laureates sent a joint letter to the Iranian Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, requesting him to intervene personally in this case and to assure Djalali receives a fair trial and subsequent exoneration and release.

Endangered Scholars Worldwide calls upon the Iranian government to end the practice of deliberately depriving political prisoners of medical care. We condemn the ongoing detention, persecution, and conviction of Ahmadreza Djalali in the strongest terms and ask all international organizations, academic and professional associations, and other groups and individuals devoted to the promotion and defense of human rights to protest this arbitrary incarceration; to call for Djalali's immediate and unconditional release; and to urge the officials of the Iranian government to "accord him an enforceable right to compensation, as per the recommendation of the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention in his case," as well as to respect, guarantee, and implement the provisions and principles of human rights as specified in international conventions and treaties.

In another well-publicized case, a group of UN experts on human rights requested in May 7, 2019, that Iran immediately release American academic XIYUE WANG, whose arbitrary detention for nearly three years is a clear violation of fundamental rights guaranteed under international law. Wang, 38, a fourth-year doctoral candidate in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Eurasian history at Princeton University, was sentenced by an Iranian court on July 17, 2017, to 10 years in prison for "spying under the cover of research." Wang, a Chinese-born US citizen, was arrested last summer while conducting research in Iran for his doctoral dissertation. Fars News reported that Wang was "gathering secret and top secret [intelligence]" for the US State Department, Harvard Kennedy School, and the British Institute of Persian Studies. He was accused of "infiltrating Iran's national archive and building

a 4,500-page digital archive” for “the world’s biggest anti-Iran spying organization.”

The UN experts’ statement follows the opinion of the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention who recently found no legal basis for Wang’s arrest and imprisonment, stating, “Mr. Wang was peacefully exercising his right to seek and receive information for academic purposes in the form of historical records held by a public body, and that this falls within the boundaries of freedom of expression.”

Endangered Scholars Worldwide deplors and condemns the ongoing detention, persecution, and conviction of XiYue Wang and calls upon all international organizations, academic and professional associations, and other groups and individuals devoted to the promotion and defense of human rights to protest this arbitrary incarceration; to ask for Wang’s immediate and unconditional release; and to urge the officials of the Iranian government to end the tactic of imprisoning dual citizen scholars and students as hostages for political gains and to respect, guarantee, and implement the provisions and principles of human rights as specified in international conventions and treaties in accordance with Iran’s obligations under international law.

**Students:** In the latest wave of oppression against Baha’i students in Iran, ANAHITA HORR, an undergraduate at the School of Architecture at Rasam Institute of Higher Education in Karaj, was expelled from her university and barred from continuing her education because she is Baha’i. Baha’i students in Iran have long been denied the right to higher education. They are often banned from registering for university altogether during the processing of their results on the nationally-competitive college entrance exam known as “Concours.” Those who do succeed in enrolling are often summarily expelled. According to SIMIN FAHANDEJ, a representative of the Baha’i International Community’s Office in Geneva to the United Nations, 50 Baha’i students have been expelled from Iranian universities in the current Iranian year (beginning March 21, 2018) because of their religious beliefs. The systematic exclusion of Baha’is

in Iran has been accelerated by a policy memorandum drafted in 1991 by the office of the then-president (now Supreme Leader), which blocks the development of the Baha'i community.

Endangered Scholars Worldwide urges Iranian authorities to stop harassing members of the Baha'i community immediately. We call on President Hassan Rouhani to defend Baha'i students' right to freedom by ensuring that universities allow them to register for college and graduate programs. ESW asks the officials of the Iranian government to respect, guarantee, and implement the provisions and principles of human rights as specified in international conventions and treaties in accordance with Iran's obligations under international law.

Students who remain in prison in Iran include ARASH SADEGHI, 32, a student rights activist sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment in September 2009 on charges of "collusion against the regime" and "insulting the Supreme Leader of Iran." Sadeghi was arrested on September 6, 2014, at his stationery store in Tehran by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps' intelligence organization. In June 2018, Sadeghi underwent a biopsy and was diagnosed with chondrosarcoma, a rare form of cancer that causes bone tumors. "After the biopsy, the assigned doctor prescribed monthly hospital visits to check his tumor and stop its growth," said the source, who spoke on the condition of anonymity for security reasons. However, authorities at Raja'i Shahr Prison in Karaj, a city northwest of Tehran, have since repeatedly impeded Sadeghi's access to potentially lifesaving medical care. According to a report published on April 2019 by the Center for Human Rights in Iran (CHRI), Sadeghi has lost the ability to move his right arm due to an infection in his shoulder that was left untreated.

Other students still in prison include HAMID BABAEI, 36, a PhD student at the University of Liege in Belgium, who was detained in August 2013 shortly after his return to Tehran and sentenced to six years in prison on charges of "communicating with hostile foreign governments and spying." Babaei has repeatedly said that he was imprisoned for refusing to operate as an informant in Belgium for Iran's

Intelligence Ministry. Recent reports suggest that he is being refused hospital treatment by the prison authorities.

Endangered Scholars Worldwide urges the Iranian authorities to release all students behind bars arrested for their peaceful activities. ESW calls on the Iranian president, Hassan Rouhani, to defend students' right to freedom of expression.

Please send appeals to the following:

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei  
The Office of the Supreme Leader  
Jomhuri Street  
Tehran  
Islamic Republic of Iran  
Fax: +98 21 644 11  
Website: <http://www.leader.ir/langs/en/>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/www.Khamenei.ir>

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

Islamic Republic of Iran  
President Hassan Rouhani  
The Office of the President  
Palestine Avenue, Azerbaijan Intersection  
Tehran  
Islamic Republic of Iran

Javad Zarif  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
The Minister's Office  
Imam Khomeini Square  
Tehran  
Islamic Republic of Iran  
Fax: +98 21 66743149  
Website: <http://www.mfa.gov.ir>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/jzarif>

## SAUDI ARABIA

*Scholars and Researchers:* On March 25, 2019, Endangered Scholars Worldwide learned that the health of MOHAMMED AL-QAHTANI, a prominent Saudi economist, is deteriorating due to conditions in the Al-Ha'ir criminal prison in Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia, where he is serving a 10-year sentence for his human rights activities. According to The Gulf Centre for Human Rights (GCHR), Al-Qahtani was transferred from his cell in the prison to a new wing on March 20, 2019. On December 18, 2018, he was placed in solitary confinement for a day. Al-Qahtani was awarded the 2018 Right Livelihood Award with Abdullah Al-Hamid and Waleed Abu Al-Khair, who are also in prison in Saudi Arabia. He and Al-Hamid cofounded the Association for Civil Rights and Political Rights (ACPRA).

Endangered Scholars Worldwide joins GCHR and other like-minded human rights organizations to call on the Saudi government to end the imprisonment and mistreatment of Al-Qahtani and other human rights defenders on account of their peaceful work.

HATOON AJWAD AL-FASSI, a prominent women's rights advocate and a writer at the *Riyadh* paper who was arrested on June 27, 2018, was among ten Saudi women brought to a closed-door hearing at Riyadh's criminal court on March 13, 2019, nearly a year after her arrest without charge. Al-Fassi joins more than a dozen women targeted in a recent government crackdown on women's rights activism, occurring even as the country ended its ban on women driving in June 2018. Family members of the women—some of whom allegedly faced torture and sexual harassment during interrogation—were permitted to attend the opening court session, but foreign journalists and western diplomats were barred from entering. A renowned scholar and an associate professor of women's history at King Saud University, Al-Fassi's work focuses on gender studies and politics. She has long been advocating for the right of women to participate in municipal elections. A leaked medical document published by the Guardian Newspaper revealed that Saudi political prisoners suffer torture and malnutrition. The medical reports are understood to have been prepared for the king along with recommendations that include potential pardoning or early release due to health concerns. Al-Fassi was reportedly examined for the review.

In March 2016 ALI ABDULLAH AL-HAJI, a professor at King Saud University in Riyadh, was arrested along with 31 others on charges of spying for Iran. According to Saudi news outlets, Al-Haji was sentenced to five years of imprisonment. Others accused include a student at Imam Muhammad Bin Saud Islamic University and an academician who held the job of "development researcher" at the Ministry of Education for more than 25 years. Endangered Scholars Worldwide has still been unable to obtain the names of the latter two defendants.

Scholars and researchers who remain in prison include ABDUL KAREEM YOUSEF AL-KHODER, a professor of comparative jurisprudence at

Qassim University who was sentenced in June 2013 to 8 years' imprisonment and a 10-year travel ban, though the case was later overturned. Authorities later retried Al-Khodr in the Specialized Criminal Court on the same charges and in October 2015 sentenced him to 10 years in prison and a 10-year ban on foreign travel. Another imprisoned scholar is SA'UD MUKHTAR AL-HASHIMI, a faculty member at the King Abdulaziz University who was sentenced in November 2011 to 30 years in prison.

Please send appeals to the following:

Ibrahim Abdulaziz Al-Assaf  
Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Nasseriya Street  
Riyadh 11124  
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia  
Fax: +966 1 403 0645

Walid bin Mohammed bin Saleh  
Al-Samaani  
Minister of Justice  
PO Box 58889, Bldg. 373  
King Fahad Road  
Riyadh 11515  
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia  
Fax: +966 1 4612061

## THAILAND

*Scholars and Researchers:* On August 21, 2017, CHAYAN VADDHANAPHUTI, director of the Regional Centre for Social Science and Sustainable Development at Chiang Mai University, who organized the thirteenth International Conference on Thai Studies along with four other Thai academics, was charged with violating the country's military junta's ban on political gatherings of more than four people. Also charged were four delegates at the conference, PAKAWADEE VEERAPATPONG, CHAIPONG SAMNIENG, NONTAWAT MACHAI, and THIRAMON BUA-NGAM, all of whom committed the same offense: holding posters reading, "An academic forum is not a military barrack," to protest the military's surveillance of participants during the conference. If convicted, they face up to one year of imprisonment.

ESW urges Thai authorities to drop these unreasonable charges and repeal the military decree that outlaws peaceful public assemblies of five or more persons.

**Students:** On Thursday, August 3, 2017, a court in Thailand began the closed-door trial of JATUPAT “PAI DAO DIN” BOONPATTARARAKSA, an activist and law student arrested for sharing an article posted on Facebook by the BBC Thai-language service about the country’s new king. The student was arrested in December 2016 and convicted on lese majeste charges that landed him behind bars for two and a half years. Jatupat is a prominent member of Dao Din, a small student organization that has protested Thailand’s military government. While in detention, he was given the Gwangju Prize, a human rights award from the May 18 Memorial Foundation in South Korea.

Endangered Scholars Worldwide believes that the lese majeste law is being used in Thailand to silence academics, students, and political dissidents. The military regime that took power in 2014 has cracked down primarily on Internet commentary. According to iLaw, a group that tracks royal defamation cases, 82 people have been charged under the lese majeste law since the coup three years ago. ESW urges the officials of the Thai government to respect, guarantee, and implement the provisions and principles of human rights as specified in international conventions and treaties and to drop any charges against the accused arising from the nonviolent exercise of the rights to expression, association, and assembly.

Please send appeals to the following:

Ambassador Vitavas Srivihok	Fax 212-688-3029
Permanent Mission of Thailand to the	Thailand@un.int
United Nations	Website: <a href="http://www.thaiembassy.org/unmissionnewyork/">http://www.thaiembassy.org/unmissionnewyork/</a>
351 East 52 <sup>nd</sup> Street, New York NY 10022	

## TURKEY

**Scholars, researchers, and students:** Endangered Scholars Worldwide continues to be extremely concerned about the Turkish government’s systematic targeting of the country’s scholars and professors. Since the signing of the Academics for Peace petition in January 2016 and the coup attempt in July of that year, Turkey’s courts and Council of Higher Education (YOK) have taken a series of actions against academ-



ics, including the dismissal of all university deans and four university presidents, and the shutting down of 15 universities. As this issue goes to press, some 6,000 academics have lost their jobs and passports in an effort to prevent them from leaving the country to seek jobs abroad. While the courts have filed cases against scholars outside the country, those who remain in Turkey following their dismissals have established solidarity and street academies in a number of cities to bring dismissed scholars together and to create an environment for them and their students to connect and produce knowledge.

As of May 2, 2019, the number of dismissed academics in Turkey is 6,021, and some 1,000 penal court hearings have been held for 610. The courts have issued 190 verdicts so far, sentencing 190 peace academics to prison under Article 7/2 of the Anti-Terror Act for carrying out terrorist propaganda. 34 of these sentences have not been deferred, while professor ZUBEYDE FUSUN USTEL's sentence was upheld by the Court of Appeals. On May 8, 2019, USTEL submitted herself to Eskisehir Women's Closed Prison.

ESW expresses our solidarity with the thousands of Turkish academics who have lost their jobs and are facing criminal charges as a result of their peaceful activities and the exercise of their freedom of speech. We are deeply distressed by the Turkish government's actions, which irreversibly harm the entire educational community by undermining universities' abilities to meet scientific and ethical standards as well as to fulfill intellectual, educational, social, and institutional responsibilities.

For full coverage of the crisis in higher education in Turkey and to sign our letter of protest, please visit <https://tinyurl.com/turkey-esw>.

Please send appeals to the following:

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan  
The Office of the President  
Cumhurbaşkanlığı Külliyesi  
06560 Beştepe, Ankara  
Turkey  
Fax: +90 312 525 58 31

Abdulhamit Gül  
Minister of Justice  
06669 Kızılay, Ankara  
Turkey  
Fax: +90 312 419 3370  
Email: [info@adalet.gov.tr](mailto:info@adalet.gov.tr)

## UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

On September 5, 2017, the United States Department of Justice announced that the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program (DACA) was being rescinded. As numerous accounts indicate, the majority of DACA recipients are students enrolled in higher education institutions. Ending DACA would, therefore, put the lives of thousands of committed students in the United States in jeopardy, denying them the ability to pursue their education and returning them to a life of anxiety and doubt.

We at Endangered Scholars Worldwide were relieved to learn that on November 8, 2018, a US appeals court blocked President Donald Trump from immediately ending the Obama-era program that shields young immigrants from deportation, saying the administration's decision was based on a flawed legal theory. We believe that upholding DACA will ensure the mission of higher learning institutions to provide safe environments in which everyone is respected and teaching and learning are fostered.

Please send appeals to the following:

William Barr

Attorney General

U.S. Department of Justice

950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20530-0001

Tell: +1 202 514 2000

Website: <http://www.justice.gov/ag>

## UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Reports suggest that Emirati professor and economist NASSER BIN GHAITH's health is severely deteriorating as he continues his hunger strike, which has lasted over 90 days. He has lost over 20 kilograms (approximately 45 pounds) and is now unable to walk without assistances. The economist, who taught at the Abu Dhabi branch of Paris-Sorbonne University, is serving a 10-year sentence handed down in March 2017 for tweets critical of UAE authorities. During his trial, the Emirati authorities restricted his access to his lawyer, and he was unable to prepare a proper defense. Bin Ghaith is being held at the Al-Razeen maximum security prison in Abu Dhabi, which is home to a

number of Emirati dissidents and where he claims to have experienced torture at the hands of officials.

Endangered Scholars Worldwide condemns the ongoing detention, persecution, and conviction of Nasser bin Ghaith and asks all international organizations, academic and professional associations, and other groups and individuals devoted to the promotion and defense of human rights to protest this arbitrary incarceration; to call for bin Ghaith's immediate and unconditional release; and to urge the officials of the UAE government to respect, guarantee, and implement the provisions and principles of human rights as specified in international conventions and treaties.

Please send appeals to the following:

Sheikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al  
Maktoum  
Prime Minister's Office  
PO Box: 212000  
Dubai, United Arab Emirates  
Fax: +971 4 330 404  
info@primeminister.ae

PO Box: 398, Abu Dhabi  
United Arab Emirates  
Fax: +971 2 402 2762 / +971 2 441 5780  
moi@moi.gov.ae

Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan  
Minister of Interior  
Zayed Sport City, Arab Gulf Street, Near to  
Shaikh Zayed Mosque

Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Al Bateen, King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Al  
Saud Street  
Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates  
Fax +971 02 444 7766  
info@mofa.gov.ae

## VIETNAM

A *student* who remains in prison is DINH NGUYEN KHA, who was sentenced to eight years' imprisonment on charges of "conducting propaganda against the state" in May 2013. He was arrested in October 2012 for handing out leaflets critical of the government. According to a report by Amnesty International, Dinh Nguyen has been denied medical treatment following an operation done in December 2016 to remove a tumor from his stomach.

ESW calls upon the Vietnamese government to end the practice of deliberately depriving political prisoners medical treatment and to

ensure that detainees receive proper care and parole in time to properly attend to their illnesses.

Please send appeals to the following:

Nguyễn Phú Trọng	Ba Đình District,
President of the Socialist Republic of	Hanoi,
Vietnam	Vietnam

## RELEASES

### CHINA

We are happy to report that GUO QUAN, 50, a literature professor at Nanjing Normal University who was sentenced to 10 years in prison in October 2009 on charges of “inciting subversion of state power,” has been released at the end of his 10-year jail term for subversion. After his release, Guo said he felt “fortunate” not to have died, as has been the fate of many of his friends.

## SOURCES

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Council for Assisting Refugee Academics.  
<http://www.academic-refugees.org>  
Endangered Scholars Worldwide. <http://www.endangered-scholarsworldwide.net>  
English PEN. <http://www.englishpen.org/writersinprison>  
Human Rights in China. <http://www.hrichina.org>  
Human Rights Watch. <http://www.hrw.org>  
*Hurriyet*. <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr>  
The International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran.  
<http://www.iranhumanrights.org>

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

*The New York Times*. <http://www.nytimes.com>

Radio Free Europe. <http://www.rfa.org>

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

Southern Mongolian Human Rights Information Center.

<http://www.smhric.org>

UN Watch. <http://blog.unwatch.org>

—Written by Ebby Abramson and Dolunay Bulut



# THE NEW UNIVERSITY IN EXILE CONSORTIUM

Around the world, **scholars are under attack** and universities are being shuttered. For some forced to flee their home countries, American colleges and universities offer shelter.

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