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Endangered Scholars Worldwide

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Endangered Scholars Worldwide

The information in this quarterly print report is current as of August 29, 2018. 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 or follow us at 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.



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 overthrow the government” during the Arab Spring protests. Al-Singace, who has long campaigned for political reform and an end to torture, was himself tortured at the time of his detention. ESW confirmed on August 8, 2018, that Dr. Al-Singace, a polio victim with special needs, is in deteriorating health and continues to be deliberately denied proper medical treatment, along with four other Bahraini activists.

Endangered Scholars Worldwide believes that the denial of medical treatment endangers the lives of jailed activists in Bahrain. According to a report published by Amnesty International, the prison

administration has not provided Al-Singace adequate medical care on a regular basis and has been refusing to replenish supplies of his medications. ESW calls for Dr. Abduljalil Al-Singace to be granted 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 all those detained in Bahrain in violation of Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Bahrain is a state party.

Students: ALI MOHAMED HAKEEM AL-ARAB, 23, was arrested on February 9, 2017. On March 7, he was moved to Dry Dock Prison. According to a report by Amnesty International dated March 15, 2018, Al-Arab alleges that he was tortured throughout 26 days of interrogation and forced to sign a confession. On January 31, the Fourth High Criminal Court in Bahrain sentenced al-Arab and Ahmad al-Malali, another Bahraini activist to death, convicting them on charges including “forming and joining a “terrorist” group.” Al-Arab remains at risk of further torture and other ill treatments.

Other students who remain in prison include AHMED AL ARAB, a nursing student arrested in January 2014 and sentenced to life imprisonment, who has reported that he was subjected to severe torture and ill treatment while held in detention. Endangered Scholars Worldwide is strongly concerned about continued attacks on Ahmed Al-Arab. On January 25, he was denied a family visit, and he has reported an increase in harassment. AHMED AOUN was arrested in May 2015 on charges of “involvement in pro-democracy demonstrations.” Five other students were sentenced to 15 years in prison at a trial on March 5, 2012, following involvement in prodemocracy demonstrations, including JAWAD AL-MAHARY, SHAWQI RADHI, JASSIM AL HULAINI, JASSIM AL-MUKHODHER, and YOUSIF AHMED. According to information received by ESW, the authorities at Dry Dock detention center, where Ahmed Auon is held, has denied proper medical treatment. ESW is deeply concerned about the continued ill treatment of scholars and students in Bahrain, and calls on the United States, the United Kingdom, the United Nations,

the European Union, and international institutions to put pressure on Bahraini authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Ahmed Al-Arab, along with all other detainees held on politically motivated charges due to the ongoing popular movement for freedom and democracy.

Please send appeals to:

His Majesty Sheikh Hamad bin Isa
Al-Khalifa
Office of His Majesty 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: Endangered Scholars Worldwide deplors the Chinese government's pervasive and ongoing crackdown on the Uyghur people. On August 9, 2017, authorities in northwest China's Xinjiang region sentenced HEBIBULLA TOHTI, a prominent Uyghur theological scholar sponsored by the country's state-sanctioned Islamic Association, to 10 years in prison on charges of "illegal religious activity" following his return from Egypt, according to local sources. Recent reports suggest that the number of political prisoners in China exceeds 1,400 by some counts, or feasibly over a million if we include the widespread incarceration of Uyghurs in what China calls "re-education centers" without legal proceedings. According to Radio Free Europe, Chinese authorities have also targeted family members of Uyghur students studying abroad. The stories of students who previously returned and were detained by Chinese authorities indicate that these students will most likely face lengthy prison sentences in China.

It has been over four years since Uyghur scholar ILHAM TOHTI, a professor of economics, was arrested on charges of promoting separat-

ism. He is now serving a life term behind bars in China. An outspoken economist, Tohti, who regularly highlighted the religious and cultural persecution of the Muslim Uyghur ethnic minority in China's Xinjiang region, was sentenced to life in prison in September 2014 by the Xinjiang People's High Court for "separatism" following a two-day show trial. ESW is particularly concerned about the reports that his wife and children would not be allowed to visit him in 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, a voice of moderation, should be seen as an important part of China's larger totalitarian designs on the Uyghurs.

Also remaining in prison is GUO QUAN, a literature professor at Nanjing Normal University, sentenced to 10 years in prison in October 2009 on charges of "inciting subversion of state power."

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

Please send appeals to:

His Excellency Xi Jinping
President of the People's Republic of
China
Zhong Nhai
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

EGYPT

On Sunday, June 3, 2018, WALID SALEM, a University of Washington doctoral student conducting research on Egypt's judiciary system, was detained in Cairo on charges of "spreading false news" and "belonging to a terrorist group." Salem's arrest comes during a wave of deten-

tions of journalists and activists in Egypt that has drawn scrutiny from Human Rights Watch and other organizations over concerns that president Abdel Fattah al-Sisi and the Egyptian government are seeking to oppress opposition voices. Under Egyptian law, suspects can be held for up to 15 days while matters are under investigation if they are considered a danger to society or present a flight risk. Those periods of detention can be extended, by law, for up to two years.

Students who remain in prison include KARIM ASHRAF MOHAMED AL-BANNA, sentenced to three years in prison in January 2015 on charges of on blasphemy and insulting the divine.


Please send appeals to:

Ambassador Yasser Reda
Egyptian Embassy to the United States
3521 International Ct. NW
Washington DC 20008
USA
Email: contact@egyptembassy.net
Website: <http://www.egyptembassy.net>

Ambassador Amr Abdellatif Aboulatta
Egyptian Permanent Representative to the
United Nations
United Nations
800 Second Avenue
New York, NY 10017
USA

IRAN

Scholars and Researchers: ABBAS EDALAT, a professor of computer science and mathematics at Imperial College London and a political activist, was arrested by Iran's Revolutionary Guards on April 15, 2018. Edalat is believed to be in the custody of Iran's Revolutionary Guard (IRGC). Reports suggest that his home in Tehran has been raided by the IRGC and that his belongings, including his computer, and notebooks, were confiscated when he was arrested. According to Fars, the semi-official state news agency, Iranian authorities acknowledged for the first time on April 26, 2018, that they were holding Mr Edalat. He is accused of being part of a British-affiliated anti-Iran group that allegedly launched espionage operations and had contacts with leaders of mass anti-government protests in 2009, the news agency said. Edalat is that latest victim of a political witch hunt who has been subjected to physical mistreatment and psychological abuse in Iran.



On February 5, 2018, Iran’s Supreme Court rejected a request to review the death sentence given to university professor AHMADREZA DJALALI, who was accused of passing information to Israel. The 45-year-old professor, who taught at the European Master in Disaster Medicine (EMDM) in Italy—a joint master’s program of the Università degli Studi del Piemonte Orientale and the Vrije Universiteit Brussel—was arrested in April 2016 in Tehran on charges of “collaboration with a hostile government” while he was visiting his family. Djalali was later accused of providing information to Israel to help it assassinate several senior nuclear scientists. Amnesty International reports that Djalali’s lawyers were told on Saturday, December 9, 2017, that the Supreme Court had considered his case and upheld his October 24 sentence in a secret process without allowing them to file defense submissions.

We at Endangered Scholars Worldwide consider this arbitrary sentence a flagrant and unjust violation of the freedom, security, and safety of an academic who is clearly a victim of political persecution—arrested without cause, held for months in solitary confinement and without access to a lawyer, and subjected to physical mistreatment and psychological abuse. We deplore this unjustified verdict 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 strongly protest and condemn this arbitrary sentence, to call for Professor Djalali’s immediate and unconditional release, and to urge 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.

An American graduate student, XIYUE WANG, a 38-year-old historian from 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 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.”

Endangered Scholars Worldwide strongly deplores 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 strongly protest and condemn this arbitrary incarceration and to call for Wang’s immediate and unconditional release. We urge the officials of the Iranian government to end the tactic of taking of dual citizen scholars and students hostage 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 who remain in prison in Iran include ARASH SADEGHI, 38, a student rights activist sentenced to 15 years’ imprisonment in September 2014 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 Sarallah Headquarters of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps’ (IRGC) Intelligence Organization. He was detained, along with his wife and two friends, in the Intelligence Organization-controlled Ward 2-A of Evin Prison. On June 29, 2018, the Center for Human Rights in Iran (CHRI) reported that Sadeghi is being denied medical leave to undergo testing for a bone tumor that could be cancerous. On August 1, 2018, Sadeghi wrote an open letter warning political activists outside of Iran about their security following the assassination of Eqbal Moradi, a political activist in Iraqi Kurdistan. The letter is available online at <https://iran-hrm.com/index.php/2018/08/09/political-prisoner-arash-sadeghi-warns-in-open-letter-iranian-authorities-kill-opponents-abroad/>.

Other students still in prison include HAMID BABAEI, 36, a PhD student at the University of Liege in Belgium, 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 consistently 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 authorities.

Please send appeals to:

His Excellency Ayatollah Ali Khamenei
The Office of the Supreme Leader
Jomhouri 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
Jomhouri
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>

LAOS

Student protestors THONGPASEUTH KEUAKOUN, SENG-ALOUN PHENGPHANH, and BOUAVANH CHANHMANIVONG, along with three others, were imprisoned in 1999 following their arrest on charges of treason for displaying posters calling for economic, political, and social change during demonstrations. According to a report from the Amnesty UK, even after eighteen years, it is not known in which prison the three students named are being held or if they are still alive.

Please send appeals to:

President Bounnhang Vorachith
Presidential Palace
Thanon Setthathirat
Ban Xiengyeun Tha, Muang Chanthaburi
Vientiane
Laos

His Excellency Thongloun Sisoulith
Prime Minister's Office
Lane Xang Avenue
Vientiane
Lao People's Democratic Republic
Fax: + 856 21 213560

SAUDI ARABIA

Scholars and Researchers: On July 18, 2018, Endangered Scholars Worldwide learned that HATOON AJWAD AL-FASSI, a prominent women's rights advocate and a writer at Al Riyadh newspaper was arrested on June 27, 2018. Hatoon al-Fassi joins more than a dozen women targeted in a recent government crackdown on women's rights activism—even as the country ended its ban on women driving on June 24, 2018. A renowned scholar, and associate professor of women's history at King Saud University, Al-Fassi's work focuses on women's history and politics. She has long been advocating for the right of women to participate in municipal elections and to drive, and was one of the first women to drive the day the ban was lifted.

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 5 years of imprisonment. The accused also include a student at Imam Muhammad Bin Saud Islamic University, as well as 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, sentenced in June 2013 to eight years' imprisonment and a ten-year travel ban, and SA'UD MUKHTAR AL-HASHIMI, a faculty member at the King Abdulaziz University, sentenced in November 2011 to 30 years in prison.

Endangered Scholars Worldwide strongly deplores and condemns the detention and persecution of Hatoon Ajwad al-Fassi, 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 strongly protest and condemn this arbitrary incarceration; to call for al Fassi's immediate and unconditional release and to urge the Saudi authorities to release all persons detained solely for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly immediately and unconditionally, and drop all charges against them.

Please send appeals to:

Adel bin Ahmed Al-Jubeir
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Nasseriya Street
Riyadh 11124
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: +966 1 403 0645

Dr. 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.

Students: On Thursday, August 3, 2017, a court in Thailand began a closed-door trial of an activist law student arrested for sharing an article posted on Facebook by the BBC Thai-language service about the country's new king. The student, JATUPAT 'PAI DAO DIN' BOONPATTARARAKSA, was arrested in December 2016 and was convicted on a 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 against 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 in Thailand used to silence academics, students, and political dissidents. The military regime that took power in 2014 has primarily cracked down on commentary on the Internet. 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 urge the Thai authorities to drop any charges against the accused arising out of the nonviolent exercise of the rights to expression, association, and assembly.

Please send appeals to:

Ambassador Thani Thongphakdi
Permanent Mission of Thailand to the
United Nations and Other International
Organizations
United Nations
5 Rue Gustave-Moynier

CH 1202 Geneva
Switzerland
Fax: + 41 22 715 1000
Website: <http://www.thaimission.ch/>
Email: mission.thailand@ties.itu.int

TURKEY

Scholars, researchers, and students: Endangered Scholars Worldwide continues to be extremely concerned about the systematic targeting by the Turkish government 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, a series of actions by Turkey's courts and Council of Higher Education (YOK) have been taken against academics, including the dismissal of all university deans, four university presidents, and the shutting down of 15 universities. As this issue goes to press, some 6000 academics have lost their jobs and passports in an effort to prevent them from leaving the country and seeking jobs abroad. In June 2018, before the presidential and general elections of June 24, the courts began to file cases against scholars who are outside the country. Those who remain in Turkey have established Solidarity and street academies in a number of cities to bring dismissed scholars together and create an environment for them and their students to connect and produce knowledge.

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 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:

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

Abdulhamit Gül
Minister of Justice
06669 Kizilay, Ankara
Turkey
Fax: +90 312 419 3370
Email: info@adalet.gov.tr

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

On September 5, 2017, United States Attorney General Jeff Sessions announced that the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program

(DACA) was being rescinded. As numerous accounts indicate, the majority of DACA recipients are students who are enrolled in higher education institutions. Ending DACA would put lives of thousands of committed students in the United States in jeopardy, deny them the ability to pursue their education, and return them to a life of anxiety and doubt.

We at Endangereed Scholars Worldwide are relieved to learn that on August 3, 2018, a US District Court judge in the District of Columbia ruled that DACA must remain in place despite efforts by the Trump administration to dismantle it. We believe that upholding DACA will ensure the mission of institutions of higher learning to provide safe environments in which everyone is respected and teaching, and learning are fostered.

Please send appeals to:

Jefferson Sessions	Washington, DC 20530-0001
Attorney General of the United States	Tell: +1 202 514 2000
U.S. Department of Justice	Website: http://www.justice.gov/ag
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW	

VIETNAM

Students who remain in prison are DINH NGUYEN KHA, 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 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 of medical care, and to ensure that detainees receive proper medical care and are granted medical parole in time to properly treat their illnesses.

Please send appeals to:

His Excellency Trần Đại Quang	Hanoi
President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam	Vietnam
c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs	

RELEASES

China

On July 10, 2018, Chinese authorities finally ended their de facto house arrest of LIU XIA, a painter, poet, and the widow of the Chinese dissident LIU XIAOBO—China’s most famous activist, a Nobel laureate and *Social Research* author—and allowed her to leave China after almost eight years of living under house arrest and days before the anniversary of her husband’s death. Despite facing no charges, the 57-year-old poet has endured heavy restrictions on her movements since 2010, when her husband won the Nobel Peace Prize—an award that infuriated Beijing. Liu Xiaobo died of liver cancer last July aged 61.

Liu Xia is now free; however, Chinese authorities still keep her brother Liu Hui under house arrest. Hui was convicted of fraud in 2013 and was sentenced to 11 years in prison in a case that right groups believe is a retaliation for the attention his brother-in-law received as the 2010 winner of the Nobel Peace Prize. He has been released under medical parole, a lesser criminal law restraint, which can be revoked by the authorities at any time.

Endangered Scholars Worldwide welcomes this news with great relief. At the same time ESW remains concerned about Xia’s brother, Liu Hui, and hopes that Chinese authorities let him join Liu Xia in Germany. ESW calls on Chinese authorities to respect, guarantee, and implement the provisions and principles of human rights as specified in international conventions and treaties.

Turkey

On July 19, 2018, Onur Hamzaoglu, a professor and cochair of a left-wing minorities political group, was released from prison at the first hearing of his trial for a press release condemning Turkey’s military action in Afrin, in the northwestern region of Syria. Hamzaoglu was among tens of thousands of academics who were arrested in the aftermath of the failed 2016 coup d’état. In February 2018, he was

accused of “terrorist propaganda” and “provoking the people to hatred and enmity.” Prior to his arrest for protesting the Afrin invasion, Hamzaoglu was dismissed from Kocaeli University for signing another petition in 2016 protesting against the Turkish military’s campaign against Kurdish insurgents in densely populated areas in the country’s predominantly Kurdish southeast region.

SOURCES

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- Amnesty International. <http://www.amnesty.org/>
- Bahrain Center for Human Rights. <http://www.bahrainrights.org/en>
- Committee of Concerned Scientists. <http://concernedscientists.org/>
- 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