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Endangered Scholars Worldwide

Matt Congdon

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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.

We urge readers to write letters on behalf of these scholars, researchers, and students. Sample letters can be found on our website at www.newschool.edu/cps/endangered-scholars.

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

The information in this report is current, to the best of our knowledge, as of June 21, 2013. Additional information and more recent information about many of these cases may be available on our website at <http://www.newschool.edu/cps/endangered-scholars/>.

SCHOLARS AND RESEARCHERS: NEW AND CONTINUING CASES

BAHRAIN

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 six months and five years, respectively, on October 21, 2012, on charges of "inciting hatred against the regime" and "calling to overthrow and

change the regime by force”; **DR. ABDUL-JALIL AL-SINGACE**, professor of engineering at the University of Bahrain, sentenced to life in prison on charges of training and financing a terrorist organization; and **RULA AL-SAFFER**, assistant professor at the College of Health Sciences and 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

CAMEROON

Previously featured scholar **ENOH MEYOMESSE**, a writer, political activist, historian, and founder of the Cameroon Writers Association, remains in prison. He was sentenced to seven years in prison on December 27, 2012, on charges of illegally trafficking gold.

Appeals to:

His Excellency Paul Biya
President of the Republic of Cameroon
Office of the President
P.O. Box 100
Yaoundé
Republic of Cameroon

Dr. Chemuta Divine Banda
Chairman
National Commission on Human Rights
and Freedoms
B.P. 20317 Yaounde
Cameroon
Phone: +237 22 22 61 17
Fax : +237 22 22 60 82
Email: cndhl@iccnet.cm

CHINA

Authorities are continuing to retaliate against imprisoned human rights activist and 2011 Nobel Peace Prize laureate LIU XIAOBO by targeting members of his family, this time his brother-in-law, LIU HUI, who was arrested in March 2013 and sentenced to 11 years of imprisonment on June 9, 2013, on charges of financial fraud over a real estate dispute. According to lawyers, the dispute was resolved months prior to the arrest and the criminal charges are unfounded. Liu Xiaobo, who has been featured numerous times in Endangered Scholars Worldwide, has been held in Jinzhou Prison since his arrest in December 2008 for “inciting subversion of state power.” His wife, Liu Xia, has been under house arrest since Liu Xiaobo was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2010. Family friend and lawyer Pu Zhiqiang has stated that the intimidation of Liu Xiaobo’s family members represents a wider pattern of selective use of the law by Chinese authorities to keep dissidents in line.

Other 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; and GUO QUAN, a former literature professor at Nanjing Normal University, sentenced to 10 years in prison and 3 years of deprivation of political rights in October 2009 on charges of “inciting subversion of state power.”

Appeals to:

His Excellency Xi Jinping
President of the People’s Republic of
China
Zhong Nhai
Beijing 100032
People’s Republic of China
Salutation: Your Excellency

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>>

Mr. Wang Shengjun
President, Supreme People’s Court No. 27
Dongjiaominxiang Dongcheng District
Beijing 100745

IRAN

According to sources at Amnesty International, the Iranian supreme court has overturned the death sentence of **ABDOLREZA GHANBARI**, a teacher of Persian literature arrested following the 2009 presidential election protests. Ghanbari had been sentenced to death on January 30, 2010, on charges of “enmity against God.” His sentence was upheld at an appeals court in April 2010, and a request for a pardon rejected on February 28, 2012. According to reports from Amnesty International, Ghanbari was forced to make false confessions under duress and was unable to be represented by his lawyer, who was also serving a prison sentence during his trial. While the overturning of the death sentence is a welcome development, Ghanbari remains imprisoned and at risk of torture, and the sentence could be reinstated.

Scholars from Iran who remain in prison include **ARZHANG DAVOODI**, a poet, teacher, and cofounder of the pro-Western Confederation for Iranian Students (CIS), imprisoned since October 2003; two academics and members of the Iranian Writers Association (IWA), **MANIJEH NAJM ERAGHI** and **DR. FARIBORZ RAIS DANA**, arrested on June 3, 2012, and May 21, 2012, respectively, for their membership in the IWA, a group that promotes writers’ rights in Iran, and sentenced to one year in prison; **SAEED MADANI**, a sociologist and member of the Nationalist-Religious Front, held without charge since January 7, 2012; **MASSOUD SEPEHR**, a political science lecturer at Shiraz Azad University, detained without charge since his arrest on November 17, 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 BADAVAM**, **FARHAD SEDGHI**, **RIAZ SOBHANI**, and **NOUSHIN KHADEM**, each sentenced to four years; four 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; **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 15 years in August 2008 for “plotting against the regime.”

Appeals to:

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed ‘Ali Khamenei The Office of the Supreme Leader Shoahada Street Qom Islamic Republic of Iran	Jomhour Tehran 1316814737 Islamic Republic of Iran
Ayatollah Sadeqh Larijani Office of the Head of the Judiciary Pasteur St., Vali Asr Ave., south of Serah-e	His Excellency Mahmoud Ahmadinejad The Presidency Palestine Avenue Azerbaijan Intersection Tehran Islamic Republic of Iran

ISRAEL

A four-month extension has been added to the already two-year pre-trial detention of **AHMED QATAMESH**, a political scientist and Palestinian activist, beginning from April 29, 2013. Amnesty International issued a statement claiming that the academic is being held in order to deter other left-wing Palestinian activists. This is the sixth time Qatamesh’s detention without charge has been extended by authorities since his arrest by Israeli security forces on April 21, 2011. Authorities claim he poses a security threat due to his alleged involvement with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). Qatamesh claims that he has not been involved with the PFLP for 14 years, although he was a supporter of the group in the 1990s. He suffers from undiagnosed ailments causing nausea and fainting, but has been barred from seeing a doctor. Qatamesh was also held in detention without charge for five years by Israeli authorities from 1993 to 1998, which was the subject of

a book made up of his prison notes and which includes allegations of torture by Israeli officials.

Appeals to:

Benjamin Netanyahu
Prime Minister's Office
3 Kaplan St.
POB 187
Kiryat Ben-Gurion
Jerusalem 91919
Israel
Email: pm_eng@pmo.gov.il

29 Salah A-din St.
Jerusalem 91010
Israel

Tziporah Livni
Ministry of Justice

Ambassador Ron Prosor
Israeli Permanent Representative to the
United Nations
800 Second Ave.
New York, NY 10017
USA

ITALY

Previously featured scholars from Italy who remain in prison include six scientists convicted in October 2012 on charges of manslaughter for failing to predict an earthquake that devastated the city of L'Aquila in 2009, including **ENZO BOSCHI**, **FRANCO BARBERI**, **BERNARDO DE BERNARDIS**, **GIULIO SALVAGI**, **CALVI GIANMICHELE**, and **CLAUDIO EVA**.

Appeals to:

Silvana Bastianello
Vice Director
Ministry of Justice

via Arenula 70
00186 Rome
Italy

MONGOLIA

ROLMAAJIDIIN TSENGEL, a southern Mongolian historian and translator, began a hunger strike in early June 2013 to protest the Mongolian authority's accusation against him of attempting to overthrow the government and by carrying out a coup. He was arrested on May 6, 2012, after aiding in the translation of Chinese materials for a documentary film about seventeenth-century Mongolian history. According to a report from the Southern Mongolian Human Rights Information Center, Tsengel's lawyer has stated that the arrest is based on false

charges and was prompted by the intervention of the Chinese government. Tsengel, formerly a Chinese citizen, had renounced his Chinese citizenship and was seeking asylum in Mongolia. According to the same report, Tsengel has been subject to torture during his detention and has not been allowed visitors.

Appeals to:

Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs
Kuhdaldaany Street 6/1
Chingeltei District 210646
Ulaanbaatar
Mongolia

Ambassador Od Och
The Permanent Mission of Mongolia to
the United Nations
6 East 77th Street
New York, NY 10075
USA

RUSSIA

Previously featured scholars from Russia who remain in prison are **SVYATOSLAV BOBYSHEV** and **YEVGENY AFANASYEV**, both professors at Baltic State Technical University in St. Petersburg, who were sentenced at a closed trial in June 2012 to 12 years in prison on charges of passing secret information to the Chinese government.

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

A court ordered the arbitrary four-month detention of **DR. ABDUL KAREEM YOUSEF AL-KHODER**, a professor of comparative jurisprudence at Qassim University, on April 25, 2013. He has been on trial since January 2013 on charges of disobeying the ruler, inciting disorder by organizing demonstrations, disseminating false information to foreign groups, and taking part in an unlicensed organization. The

charges came after he founded a human rights organization called the Saudi Civil and Political Rights Organization. No reasons were given for the detention and neither al-Khoder nor his lawyer was allowed to meet with the judge after the trial. He is currently being held at Buraydah prison.

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; they were 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

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

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

TURKEY

The trial of previously featured scholar **BÜSRA ERSANLI**, a constitutional law expert and professor of political science at Marmara University in Istanbul, recommenced on May 27, 2013, after a pause since July 2012. She faces charges of “leadership of an illegal organization,” punishable under Turkey’s Anti-Terrorism Laws for her membership in the constitutional commission of the Peace and Democracy Party (BDP), a political party that Turkish authorities allege is linked to the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), which is banned in Turkey. Several organizations, such as Scholars at Risk, have claimed that Ersanli is being targeted for peaceful expressive activities and that any charges related to these activities be dismissed.

Previously featured scholars from Turkey who remain in prison are **KEMAL GÜRÜZ**, a former university rector and retired professor at Middle East Technical University in Ankara, arrested on June 25, 2012, on charges related to the political transition in Turkey in 1997; **AYSE BERKTAY**, a historian, translator, and women’s activist, arrested in October 2011 as part of a crackdown on the pro-Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party (BDP); **FATİH HILMIOĞLU**, former rector of İnönü University in Malatya, detained since April 2009 on charges of attempting to violently overthrow the government; and **DR. MEHMET HABERAL**, founder and dean of Baskent University in Ankara and an expert on organ transplants, held in detention without trial since 2009, on charges of involvement with a terrorist organization.

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**. To our knowledge the name of the sixth student has not been released.

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

ALEXANDER OTROSCHENKOV (also transliterated as **ALIAKSANDER ATROSCCHANKAU**), a previously featured student from Belarus, remains in prison. He is an international law student at the European Humanities University, 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

CHINA

WANGCHUK DORJE, a Tibetan student leader at the Middle School of Humanities in Rebkong County, was sentenced in June 2013 to four years of imprisonment for his alleged role in organizing student protests. He was detained after protests in November 9, 2012, which called for greater rights for Tibetans, in particular the use of Tibetan as their language of instruction in their schools.

Appeals to:

His Excellency Xi Jinping
President of the People's Republic of
China
Zhong Naihui
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 6529 2345 (c/o Ministry of
Communication)
Salutation: Dear President

IRAN

ASHKAN ZAHABIAN and **AFSHIN KESHTKARI**, both student activists, were arrested on May 27 and 18, 2013, respectively, as part of a crack-down on dissidents just prior to the June 2013 presidential election. Zahabian was taken by authorities to Babol Prison to serve an eight-month sentence on charges of "acting against national security" and "spreading propaganda against the system." Zahabian had been arrested previously in 2009 as a result of his support of Mehdi Karroubi's presidential campaign. Keshtkari was summoned to the Revolutionary Court of Shiraz to serve six months in prison. He was convicted of "forming an illegal group with the intention of harming national security." He is

a founding member of the Islamic Student Association at the University of Technology in Shiraz. According to Amnesty International, the timing and manner of the two arrests indicates that they were intended to deter other students from taking part in student activism surrounding the presidential election.

Previously featured students from Iran who remain in prison include: **OMID KOKABEE**, a PhD student in physics, sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment in July 2012 on charges of communicating with a hostile government and taking illegal earnings; **MOHSEN SANATIPOUR**, a student activist and journalist, sentenced to one year in prison in the spring of 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; **SOROUSH SABET**, serving a two-year sentence in connection with his involvement in protests in 2007; **LEVA KHANJANI**, a member of the persecuted Baha'i religious minority, banned from receiving further education and serving a two-year sentence in connection with her involvement in protests in 2009; **SAYED ZIAODDIN (ZIA) NABAVI**, serving a 10-year sentence after attending protests following the 2009 elections; **NASIM SOLTAN BEIGI**, serving a six-year sentence for "propaganda against the regime" and "assembly and collusion against national security"; 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

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
Jomhouri
Tehran 1316814737

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

LAOS

Students protestors **THONGPASEUTH KEUAKOUN**, **SENG-ALOUN PHENG-PHANH**, and **BOUAVANH CHANHMANIVONG** remain in prison following their arrest on charges of treason in 1999 for displaying posters during a demonstration that called for economic, political, and social change.

Appeals to:

President Choummaly Sayasone
Office of the President
Vientiane, Laos

TURKEY

Previously featured scholar **PINAR SELEK**, a writer, feminist, and PhD candidate in political science at the University of Strasbourg, was convicted in absentia on January 24, 2013, and sentenced to aggravated life imprisonment for her alleged role in a 1998 explosion at an Istanbul market. As a result of her sociological research on Kurdish issues she was charged with “membership in an illegal organization” under Turkey’s Anti-Terror Law. Selek fled Turkey prior to the trial, and a warrant for her arrest has been issued and sent to Interpol.

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

VIETNAM

Student activists Dinh Nguyen Kha and Nguyen Phuong Uyen were sentenced to eight and six years in prison, respectively, on charges of “conducting propaganda against the state” at a trial in May 2013. The two were arrested in October 2012 for handing out leaflets critical of the government. The leaflets, signed by a group called Patriotic Youth, accused the Vietnamese government of allowing China to exploit Vietnamese natural resources and take over neighboring islands.

Appeals to:

His Excellency Troang Tan Sang
President of the Socialist Republic of
Vietnam
c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Hanoi
Socialist Republic of Vietnam
Salutation: Your Excellency

Nguyễn Tân Dung
Prime Minister
1 Hoang HoaTham Street
Hanoi
Socialist Republic of Vietnam
Salutation: Your Excellency

GOOD NEWS: RELEASES

TUNISIA

We are happy to report that **DR. HABIB KAZDAGHLI**, scholar of minority rights and dean of the Faculty of Letters, Arts, and Humanities at the University of Manouba, was acquitted of all charges on May 2, 2013. He had been charged with “violence perpetrated by a civil servant in the course of his duties” and faced up to five years’ imprisonment. The charges arose after a physical confrontation between Kazdaghli and two ultraconservative Muslim protesters who had entered the dean’s office and were destroying his papers. This occurred in the midst of efforts by Salafists (a conservative Muslim group) to introduce Shari’a law into the workings of the university, efforts Kazdaghli vocally opposed.

SOURCES:

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/>>
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.iranhumanrights.org/>>
Islamic Human Rights Commission <<http://www.ihrc.org/>>
Scholars at Risk (SAR) <<http://scholarsatrisk.nyu.edu/>>
Southern Mongolian Human Rights Information Center <<http://www.smhric.org/>>

—Written by Matt Congdon

