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Endangered Scholars Worldwide

Social Research: An International Quarterly, Volume 87, Number 1, Spring 2020, pp. v-xxix (Article)

Published by Johns Hopkins University Press



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Endangered Scholars Worldwide

The information in this quarterly print report is current as of April 10, 2020. 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.




SPECIAL REPORT

Letter of Appeal on Behalf of Kylie Moore-Gilbert Sentenced to Ten Years in Iran Prison

Letters smuggled out of Evin prison reveal that Iran has tried to recruit the British-Australian academic Kylie Moore-Gilbert as a spy for Tehran in exchange for her release, but the overture was furiously rebuffed. Kylie Moore-Gilbert, a University of Melbourne lecturer and researcher specializing in Middle East politics, has been detained since August 2018 by the Islamic Republic of Iran and was sentenced to 10 years for undisclosed reasons. She is currently being held in Ward 2A, an isolated Revolutionary Guard-run wing of Tehran's notorious Evin prison.

In a series of handwritten letters to Iranian authorities, Moore-Gilbert declares that her detention is nothing but a political hostage-taking. In the letter she reveals that in October 2019 she was shown two



alternative decisions to her appeal: one for a 13-month sentence (essentially “time served,” which would have seen her released), another confirming the original sentence of 10 years. “How is it possible that two very different appeal decisions were delivered to ‘2A’ detention centre? It is clear that Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps Intelligence is playing an awful game with me. I am an innocent victim,” Moore-Gilbert said. In a letter to her “case manager,” Moore-Gilbert writes,

Please accept this letter as an official and definitive rejection of your offer to me to work with the intelligence branch of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps.... Under no circumstances will I be persuaded to change my decision ... I am not a spy. I have never been a spy and I have no interest to work for a spying organization in any country. When I leave Iran, I want to be a free woman and live a free life, not under the shadow of extortion and threats.

In a letter dated August 26, Moore-Gilbert begs the prison bosses to move her from the isolated 2A section of Evin prison to the general female section, as demanded by Iranian law following her sentencing and the rejection of her appeal.

I have been in 2A for almost a year and especially after my verdict, my health has deteriorated significantly. In the past month I have been to the special care at Baghiatallah Hospital twice and the prison infirmary six times ... I think I am in the midst of a serious psychological problem, I can no longer stand the pressures of living in this extremely restrictive detention ward anymore. My situation here is even more difficult due to the ban on having any phone calls with my family. I worry a lot about their reactions to my verdict, but I cannot talk to them. This is really inhumane.

“I am an innocent woman,” she wrote to prison chiefs in August, “[and] have been imprisoned for a crime I have not committed and for which there is no real evidence.... This is a grave injustice, but unfortunately

it is not a surprise to me—from the very beginning [of my arrest] it was clear that there was fabrications and trumped-up accusations.” She signed off the letter “Professor of Melbourne University and an innocent political prisoner.”

Moore-Gilbert’s most immediate concern is with her simple survival in prison. She has repeatedly written to authorities requesting better access to medication and for money to buy personal items and food she can safely eat—she is allergic to much of the prison’s food. She says she needs about \$50 a month to survive. “I am entirely alone in Iran. I have no friends or family here and in addition to all the pain I have endured here, I feel like I am abandoned and forgotten, that after so many times of asking my embassy, I still have no money at all to endure all of this.”

We at Endangered Scholars Worldwide consider Kylie Moore-Gilbert’s detention a flagrant and unjust violation of the freedom, security, and safety of an academic who has been caught up in the political tension between the United Kingdom and Iran—arrested without cause, held for weeks in solitary confinement and without access to a lawyer, and subjected to physical mistreatment and psychological abuse.

Endangered Scholars Worldwide deplores and condemns the ongoing detention, persecution, and conviction of Kylie Moore-Gilbert 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 ask for her immediate and unconditional release; and to urge the officials of the Iranian government to end the tactic of taking of foreign nationals and dual citizen scholars and students hostage for political gains and to respect, guarantee, and implement the provisions and principles of human rights.

NEW AND CONTINUING CASES

BAHRAIN

Scholars and Researchers: Endangered Scholars Worldwide (ESW) joins other human rights organizations in calling on the Bahraini government, amid the global threat posed by COVID-19, to release all scholars and students imprisoned solely for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression, assembly, and association. Even though on March 17, 2020, Bahrain released 1,486 prisoners, imprisoned scholars and students—many of whom are older and suffer from underlying medical conditions—have been excluded from such decrees. Given the poor, unsanitary conditions in Bahrain’s prisons and the inadequate medical care, prisoners who are vulnerable to COVID-19, such as ABDULJALIL AL-SINGACE, 57, former head of the Department of Engineering at the University of Bahrain, should be considered for early release, parole.

Since 2011, Al-Singace has been in Jau Prison—Bahrain’s largest prison, where the lack of adequate sanitation led to a scabies outbreak in December 2011—on a life sentence for allegedly “plotting to overthrow the government” during the Arab Spring protests. He has been subjected to torture and various other forms of mistreatment. Bahraini officials have consistently ignored Al-Singace’s requests for medical attention despite his long-term poliomyelitis, which has left him paralyzed since childhood.

Students: ALI MOHAMED HAKEEM AL-ARAB, 23, a nursing student, was arrested on February 9, 2017, with his cousin, AHMED AL-ARAB, 27, 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." According to a report published by Bahrain Center for Human Rights, Ali Al-Arab has not been permitted to visit a doctor or receive medication since he tried to escape from prison in 2017. The family member said that he suffers from severe pain in his leg and his back, as well as several broken teeth and a dislocated jaw, which they alleged were the result of torture.

As we have reported repeatedly, 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, Ahmed Al-Arab, and all other prisoners access to all necessary medical care as a matter of urgency. We urge the authorities to ensure that those who remains in prison has access to disease prevention and treatment services, including ensuring physical distancing of prisoners at all times.

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

BANGLADESH

On Monday, October 7, 2019, ABRAR FAHAD, a second-year-student of electrical and electronic engineering at Dhaka's Bangladesh University of Engineering (Buet), was beaten to death in his university's dormitory days after criticizing the government on Facebook. Several members of the Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL)—the youth wing of the governing Awami League party—were detained in connection with the death. After the attack, Fahad was rushed to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital.

Endangered Scholars Worldwide condemns this attack in the strongest possible terms. In recent years there has been a rise in extremist violence in Bangladesh, including a series of assassinations of bloggers or intellectuals who have criticized militant Islam. Students, professors, and academics have been increasingly targeted in violent attacks—an unacceptable trend that hurts the future of societies at large. Universities, as all-in-one symbols of freedom, empowerment, and peace, are increasingly targeted for the values they promote, which stand in strong contrast with the extremist ideology and ruthless methods of terrorist groups.


Please send appeals to the following:

Ambassador Mohammad Ziauddin USA
Embassy of Bangladesh Tel: +1 202 244 2745
3510 International Drive NW
Washington, DC 20008

CHINA

Scholars and Researchers: The repression of the Muslim minority in Xinjiang, whatever Beijing may say, is a reality. According to a report published by the French daily newspaper *L'Humanité*, the Chinese authorities would imminently carry out the execution of TASHPOLAT TIYIP, a prominent Uyghur academic, member of the Chinese Communist Party, renowned scholar of geography, and former president of Xinjiang University (XJU). Tiyip was sentenced to death in a secret and grossly unfair trial for “ethnic separatism.” Kidnapped in 2017, he has been arbitrarily detained since. On March 2017, XJU announced that Tiyip had been removed from his position as president. According to the reports published by Amnesty International, Tiyip had been detained at Beijing airport en route to Germany for a conference. No information has been made available about charges and proceedings against him, and his current whereabouts remain unknown. ESW calls on the Chinese authorities to immediately halt plans to carry out the execution of Tashpolat Tiyip and release him unconditionally.

Tiyip is not the only Uyghur academic incarcerated in northwest China’s Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR), where an estimated 1.5 million Uyghurs and other Muslim ethnic minorities accused of harboring “strong religious views” and “politically incorrect” ideas are being held 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 (URHP) on December 15, 2019, the Chinese government has interned, imprisoned, or forcibly disappeared more than 400 intellectuals, among them “an alarming 77 university professors” and more than 100 students, as part of its intensified assault on Uyghurs and the



extermination of their culture in East Turkestan. By the date of this 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 the “re-education camps” that the Chinese government describes as having been set up for “vocational training” exercises. The report notes that faculty from the 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; its 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.

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.

On December 17, 2019, jailed Uyghur scholar, ILHAM TOHTI, who has been in prison on a life sentence since September 23, 2014, received the 2019 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought in absentia in Strasbourg, France. An outspoken economics professor who regularly highlighted the religious and cultural persecution of the Uyghurs, Tohti, 49, was arrested on charges of promoting separatism. 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 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.

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.

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 Nhaihai
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 March 3, 2020, Endangered Scholars Worldwide learned that the detained University of Bologna researcher and student PATRICK GEORGE ZAKI, who was allegedly tortured and mistreated by Egyptian authorities, will again appear in court after his appeal was rejected by the Mansoura II Misdemeanors Appeals Court. The 27-year-old, who had been on leave from Egypt since last August to pursue studies in Italy, was arrested on February 7, 2020 after landing in Cairo's international airport for a family visit. Zaki's arrest has alarmed many in Italy, where the researcher is pursuing a Master's degree in gender and women's studies at the University of Bologna, amid fears of a repeat of the case of murdered Italian doctoral student Giulio Regeni. Regeni's body was found showing extensive signs of torture on a roadside on the outskirts of Cairo in 2016.

Zaki, who was allegedly involved with social activism many years ago, was arrested as part of Egypt's ongoing crackdown on dissent. He is accused of calling for protests against the government and for the "spread fake news." His lawyers requested his release on the grounds of procedural irregularities and lack of evidence because he has a verified address and would be unable to tamper with case evidence, if there was any. They have said that he was beaten, subjected to electric shocks, threatened, and questioned about his work and activism before he appeared at a public prosecutor's office in his hometown of Mansoura on Saturday, a day after his detention in the Egyptian capital.

Rights activists say Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi has overseen an unprecedented crackdown on freedom—including banning all unauthorized demonstrations—since first taking power in 2013 and then winning the election in 2014. Recent laws in Egypt have expanded the definition of "terrorism" to include all political dissent, granting prosecutors broad power to keep people detained for months and even years without ever filing charges or presenting evidence.


Endangered Scholars Worldwide considers the detention of Patrick George Zaki a flagrant and unjust violation of the freedom,



security, and safety of a scholars and students in Egypt and strongly deplores and condemns his ongoing detention and persecution. We call upon all international organizations, academic and professional associations, and other groups and individuals devoted to the promotion and defense of human rights to protest and condemn this arbitrary incarceration; to call for his immediate and unconditional release; and to urge the officials of the Egyptian government to respect, guarantee, and implement the provisions and principles of human rights.

Endangered Scholars Worldwide is also deeply concerned about the arbitrary arrest and sentencing of five Cairo University academics in the aftermath of the September protests against the Egyptian government.

Professor HASAN NAFAA is a highly respected political scientist and commentator. According to Al-Jazeera, Nafaa's arrest took place after a media smear campaign against him, which aired a leaked recording of a phone call between Nafaa and a journalist asking him to appear in a documentary produced in cooperation with Al-Jazeera. Nafaa is accused of publishing fake news and of incitement against the Egyptian state. According to the *New York Times*, the day before Nafaa's arrest he wrote a Facebook post that contended in part that "I have no doubt that the continuation of [Egyptian president] Sisi's absolute rule will lead to catastrophe, and that Egypt's interest requires that he leave office as soon as possible, but he will not step down without popular pressure from the street." Following the arrest, Nafaa was taken for a long interrogation session that ended in his being sent to the State Security Court on September 26. The Court sentenced him to 15 days in Tura prison for "participating in a terrorist group," "spreading false news," and using social media to spread rumors. According to the Egyptian Center for Economic and Social Rights, the public prosecutor levied additional charges against Nafaa on October 5, 2019, and on October 6, Nafaa was detained for an additional 15 days. As of this report, Nafaa remains in prison.



HAZEM HOSNI, a professor of economics and political science, was arrested on September 24, 2019, and later sentenced to 15 days in prison for “participating in a terrorist group,” “spreading false news,” and using social media to spread rumors. In addition, he has been accused of “using his personal online profile to publish rumors which endanger public safety, spread terror among the population, and harm the public interest.” Like Nafaa, Hosni also had written a Facebook post criticizing President Sisi’s regime in the days immediately preceding his arrest. Professor Hosni has actively participated in electoral politics, serving as the spokesperson for the presidential campaign of former Egyptian military chief of staff Sami Anan, who was imprisoned two months before the March 2018 presidential elections and remains in custody.

Another Cairo University professor active in electoral politics, professor of urban planning MAGDI KERQAR, has also been arrested. At least 19 other leaders and members of the party were arrested around the same time as Kerqar. Finally, AHMAD HELMY HAMDUN, a teaching assistant in the department of economics and political science, was arrested on September 26, 2019, while sitting with his brother, Mohamed Helmy Hamdun, and his sister-in-law, Asmaa Dabees, a well-known feminist and founder of the group “Daughter of the Nile,” in a cafe in Damanshour. They were taken forcibly into a van outside the cafe by men in civilian clothing and remained incommunicado with their whereabouts unknown for five days. On October 1, all three of them were sentenced to 15 days in jail. As of this report, they remain in prison.

Endangered Scholars Worldwide deplors and condemns the detention of Hasan Nafaa, Hazem Hosni, Magdi Kerqar, and Ahmad Helmy Hamdun 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 and condemn these arbitrary incarcerations and to call for the academics’ immediate release and the dropping of all charges against them.

Please send appeals to the following:

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 Mohamed Fathi Ahmed
Edrees
Egyptian Permanent
Representative to the United Nations
United Nations
800 Second Avenue
New York, NY 10017
USA

ETHIOPIA

According to a report published by Ethiopia's Ministry of Science and Higher Education, protests and unrest have led 35,000 students to stop attending classes at 22 universities due to safety reasons. The ministry stated that it has taken various disciplinary measures against hundreds of university staff and students who are suspected of involvement in unrest. "The ministry has also formed a committee to prevent the recurrence of unrest in Ethiopian universities, as well as facilitate the return of 35,000 university students back to their studies."

Ethnic clashes in various Ethiopian universities since last November have killed more than ten students and left many others injured. The clashes have prompted Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed to warn that his government could close down universities if the unrest continues. In recent years, Ethiopia's higher education institutions have become scenes of violence between students over ethnic and religious differences. Students, professors, and academics have been increasingly targeted in violent attacks—an unacceptable trend that hurts the future of societies at large. Universities, as symbols of freedom, empowerment, and peace, are attacked for the values they promote, values that stand in strong contrast with the extremist ideology now dominant in Ethiopia.

Please send appeals to the following:

Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali
Office of the Prime Minister
P.O. Box 1031
Addis Ababa
Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
Email: mfa.addis@telecom.net.et

Mr. Getachew Ambaye
Ministry of Justice
P.O. Box 1370
Addis Ababa
Ethiopia
Fax: +251 11 5517775 / 5520874
Email: ministry-justice@telecom.net.et

IRAN

Scholars and Researchers: Iran, one of the countries most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, has temporarily released around 85,000 prisoners due to fear of the novel coronavirus. However, the foreign and dual national academics remain incarcerated. Political prisoners and foreign academics such as the British-Australian academic Kylie Moore-Gilbert have also been excluded from the furloughing of prisoners.

Other scholars who remain in prison are the French Iranian anthropologist FARIBA ADELKHAH, who was also arrested as she was conducting research into Iranian society. Adelkhah, 60, is a director of research at Sciences Po's Centre for International Studies (CERI). She is a well-known anthropologist and researcher on Iran and Shiite Islam. Believed to have been arrested by the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) on suspicion of spying, Adelkhah has traveled frequently between the two countries and spent nearly half of the past 18 months in Iran where her family lives, friend and fellow academic Jean-Francois Bayart told AFP.

In addition, AHMADREZA DJALALI, 45, a professor, physician, and researcher affiliated with the Karolinska Institute near Stockholm who focused on crisis management, 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, was sentenced to death on October 20, 2017. The Iranian government has disclosed no evidentiary basis for

the allegations, which Djalali has denied, 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.

We at Endangered Scholars Worldwide are deeply concerned about the detention of dual nationals in response to their exercise of the rights to academic freedom, free expression, and free association, conduct that is expressly protected under international human rights instruments including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, both to which Iran is a party. We believe that universities and academics around the world must take a firm stance when academic freedom is threatened because, ultimately, the global challenge of defending that freedom requires collective and institutionalized action.

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." 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. In July 2019, the UN listed Sadeghi as prisoners in Iran who have been repeatedly denied adequate medical treatment. “The critical condition of human rights defender Arash Sadeghi, who has reportedly been diagnosed with a rare form of bone cancer, is particularly alarming,” UN experts said in a statement. On April 10, 2020, ESW learned that the Sadeghi’s condition has worsened, and he is in an immediate risk of losing his arm.

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
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>

SAUDI ARABIA

Scholars and Researchers: The trial of five Saudi human rights activists has been delayed due the court’s closure because of coronavirus. In January 2020, Endangered Scholars Worldwide learned that the authorities in Saudi Arabia arrested about a dozen intellectuals and activists and have increased their tactics of “intimidation” and “torture” against other detainees, as reported by the Saudi Human Rights group ALQST.

According to the London-based organization, on November 16, the writers BADER AL RASHED, SULAIMAN AL SAIJAN AL NASER, UAAD AL MUHAYA, and MUSAB FUAD were arrested in the capital. According to the same report, the health of FAHAD AL-QAHTANI, a prominent Saudi economist who has been in jail since 2011, is deteriorating due to conditions in the Al-Ha'ir criminal prison in Riyadh. 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. 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-Khoder 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

Permanent Mission of Thailand to the
United Nations

351 East 52nd Street

New York NY 10022

Fax 212-688-3029


Thailand@un.int

Website: [http://www.thaiembassy.org/
unmissionnewyork/](http://www.thaiembassy.org/unmissionnewyork/)

TURKEY

Scholars, researchers, and students: On July 26, 2019, Turkey's Constitutional Court held a meeting to examine individual applications from 10 academics who had been sentenced to between 15 months and 3 years in prison for having signed the Academics for Peace petition. The high court has ruled that the trial of the Academics for Peace based on charges of terrorist propaganda as per the Anti-Terror Law was a violation of their freedom of expression, and it overturned the lower courts' rulings with a request of retrial.

Following the signing of the Peace petition in January 2016 and the coup attempt in July of that year, Turkey's courts and Council of Higher Education (YOK) took a series of actions against academics and the autonomy of higher education institutions, including the dismissal of all university deans and four university presidents, and the shut-



ting down of 15 universities. Since the beginning of individual trials of Peace scholars, 822 of 1,128 Peace academics had been on trial per charges of terrorist propaganda.

The announcement of the high court's landmark decision in July 2019 has gradually reflected on lower court decisions in 722 of 822 cases as the acquittal of charges. However, despite the court verdicts, none of the affected academics have been reinstated to their positions, nor have they been compensated for psychological and physical damages they endured. Peace academics have also stated that the lower courts have adopted an arbitrary and individualized approach, which has slowed the process of exculpation, as well as the revalidation of their passports.

As this issue goes to press, 6,021 academics, including those who have been acquitted of terrorism charges, have lost their jobs and passports in an effort to prevent them from leaving the country to seek jobs abroad. While fighting for the reinstatement of their rights and freedoms, Peace scholars have established solidarity and street academies in a number of cities in Turkey to bring dismissed scholars together and to create an environment for them and their students to connect and produce knowledge, similar to the transnational academic solidarity initiatives joined by those in exile.

Endangered Scholars Worldwide welcomes this news with great relief. ESW has been monitoring the struggle of academics in Turkey for four years, making inquiries on a daily basis. The ongoing tensions in Turkey have a profoundly unsettling effect on academic freedom and pose a grave threat to higher education on a national scale. We at ESW consider the Constitutional Court decision a significant development and hope to share news of the exoneration and reinstatement of those who were dismissed from their positions due to peaceful exercise of their freedom of expression and association, conduct that is expressly protected under international human rights instruments, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to both of which Turkey is party.

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 Bestepe, 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

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

On April 10, 2020, Endangered Scholars Worldwide learned that the recipients of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program (DACA) are not eligible for the emergency aid the US Congress set aside in its stimulus package to help students who have experienced disruptions due to the closure of campuses during the coronavirus epidemic.

The DACA program was created in 2012 under the Obama administration to allow immigrants who arrived in the US unlawfully as children to work and live in the country without the fear of deportation. As numerous accounts indicate, the majority of DACA recipients are students enrolled in higher education institutions, and this decision directly affects them. The new decision by the US government makes it even more difficult for colleges to get money in the hands of those who need it.

We at Endangered Scholars Worldwide believe that any form of discrimination against DACA recipients impedes 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

Scholar: According to a report dated December 10, 2019 by the *Washington Post*, the Emirati professor and economist NASSER BIN GHAITH's health is severely deteriorating. He is now unable to walk without assistance. 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

Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan
Minister of Interior
Zayed Sport City, Arab Gulf Street, Near to
Shaikh Zayed Mosque
PO Box: 398
Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates
Fax: +971 2 402 2762 / +971 2 441 5780
moi@moi.gov.ae
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

Scholar: On November 15, 2019, Endangered Scholars Worldwide learned that Vietnamese University lecturer PHAM XUAN HAO, 54, was convicted to 12 months in prison for “abusing democratic rights and freedoms to infringe upon state interests.” Hao is an internationally renowned scholar and has spent most of his life working as a lecturer at the Technology Faculty of the University of Can Tho, one of the major universities in southern Vietnam. According to the 88 Project, during the trial, the prosecutors argued that Hao used Facebook to “publish pessimistic information about Vietnam that negatively affects netizens and the public.” The judges also asserted that he has tried to libel the policies of the Party and the State.

Since January 2019, 21 people have been arrested for criticizing the government, 12 of whom were arrested as a result of their online activity. Hao is the thirteenth individual this year prosecuted for peaceful online political comments. Endangered Scholars Worldwide deplores and condemns the detention of Xuan Hao 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 call for Hao’s immediate and unconditional release; and to urge the officials of the Vietnamese government to respect, guarantee, and implement the provisions and principles of human rights.

A *student* who remains in prison is 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.

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
President of the Socialist Republic of
Vietnam

Ba Đình District,
Hanoi, Vietnam

RELEASES

IRAN

Endangered Scholars Worldwide learned that on March 21, 2020 Iran freed ROLAND MARCHAL after a prisoner swap with France. Marchal was arrested on June 2019 upon arrival at the airport in Tehran along with the French Iranian anthropologist Fariba Adelhah, who was also arrested that day. Following the release of Marchal, Sciences Po released a statement expressing “immense joy” and “great relief” but also said that they can “celebrate fully (only) when both of our friends are with us again.” Endangered Scholars Worldwide welcomes the news of Marchal’s release with great relief and asks the officials of the Iranian government for the immediate and unconditional release of his partner Fariba Adelhah, currently imprisoned in Evin prison. We urge the Iranian authorities to end the tactic of taking foreign nationals and dual citizen scholars and students hostage for political gains and to respect, guarantee, and implement the provisions and principles of human rights.

SOURCES

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Birgun. <https://www.birgun.net/>

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Council for Assisting Refugee Academics.

<http://www.academic-refugees.org>

Endangered Scholars Worldwide.

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Southern Mongolian Human Rights Information Center.

<http://www.smhric.org>

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—Written by *Ebby Abramson and Dolunay Bulut*