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Endangered Scholars Worldwide

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IRAN

SINCE OUR LAST ISSUE THE SITUATION IN IRAN HAS WORSENER. According to the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran, over 90 students were arrested and many more suspended in order to forestall protests in the run up to National Student Day (December 7). On the day itself, Tehran police reported that they arrested 204 demonstrators. Over the following days, clashes continued at the universities, where militiamen set up impromptu occupations and violently attacked students. Chief prosecutor Gholamhossein Mohseni-Ejei was reported by Iranian news agencies to declare that “from now on, we will show no mercy toward anyone who acts against national security.”

These recent escalations come at a time when many of those arrested last June continue to languish in jail, while new arrests continue every month. **KIAN TAJBAKHSH**, the former New School professor and *Social Research* contributor for whom we organized a petition signed by 1,200 people over the summer, was sentenced to up to 15 years by a closed military tribunal on October 20 on bogus charges of “acting against national security.” He was denied the right to appeal, repeatedly denied access to his lawyer, and continues to be held in solitary confinement in Evin Prison. Since his sentencing he has also been brought before the courts on supplementary charges of espionage based on emails he wrote to Middle East specialists on the Gulf 2000 list, an open research forum that includes hundreds of academics, diplomats, and journalists.

MOHAMMED MALEKI, the former Chancellor of Tehran University, and **BIJAN KHAJEPOUR-KHOUEI**, an economist and *Social Research*

Information current, to the best of our knowledge, as of December 10, 2009.

contributor, both also featured in our previous issue, continue to be held in prison without charges. Dr Maleki suffers from prostate cancer, and his family and lawyer have noted a severe worsening of his health since his arrest, while Khajepour-Khouei, of whom there has been no word since his arrest, suffers from diabetes. In addition to these imprisoned scholars, **SAEED LAYLAZ**, an Iranian economist and a professor at Shahid Beheshti University in Tehran, was sentenced to nine years in prison on December 1, convicted of maintaining ties with foreigners and working to overthrow the government. **CLOTHILDE REISS**, a French graduate student who was arrested and accused of spying after taking photographs of the protests in June, remains released on bail awaiting trial.

Other scholars featured in previous issues who remain in prison in Iran include: **FARZAD KAMANGER**, a Kurdish Iranian teacher sentenced to death in February 2008 on charges of “endangering national security”; **DR. MOSTAFA ALAVI**, an Iranian doctor and researcher sentenced to 15 years’ imprisonment in August 2008 for “plotting against the regime”; **DRS. ARASH** and **KAMIAR ALAËI**, two AIDS researchers who were sentenced to three and six years in January 2009 for “seeking to overthrow the Iranian government”; and **BEHROOZ JAVID-TEHRANI**, a student activist and prisoners rights campaigner arrested in 2005 for membership of an illegal organization. All of these people are being held in life-threatening conditions and need your support.

Appeals to:

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed
'Ali Khamenei
Leader of the Islamic Republic
The Office of the Supreme Leader
Islamic Republic Street–
Shahid Keshvar Doust Street
Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran
E-mail: info@leader.ir
Salutation: Your Excellency

Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi
Head of the Judiciary
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
E-mail: info@dadgostary-tehran.ir
(In the subject line write:
FAO Ayatollah Shahroudi)
Salutation: Your Excellency

Gholam Hossein Mohseni Ejeie
Minister of Intelligence
Ministry of Intelligence
Second Negarestan Street,
Pasdaran Avenue
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
Salutation: Your Excellency

VIETNAM

On October 8, 2009, Vietnamese police arrested **TRAN KHAI THANH THUY**, a well-known writer, after she publicly defended six dissidents facing trial. Tran Khai Thanh Thuy has written many novels, poems, and essays and published the dissident magazine *To Quoc*. According to PEN, she has been under surveillance since September 2006, and has suffered harassment for her criticisms of the government. She is a member of the Union of Writers and the Club of Women Poets of Hanoi, and won the 2008 Hellman Hammet Award. She was detained as she made her way to Hai Phong to support the activists as they faced trial, and was reportedly beaten during her arrest. Tran Khai Thanh Thuy has subsequently been charged with assault, and she faces up to three years in prison. Tran Khai Thanh Thuy suffers from diabetes and tuberculosis, and there are serious concerns that her health is deteriorating in prison.

Appeals to:

His Excellency Nguyễn Minh Triết
President of the Socialist Republic of
Vietnam
C/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Hanoi
Socialist Republic of Vietnam

Lê Doan Hop
Minister of Culture and Information
1 Hoang Hoa Tham Street
Hanoi
Socialist Republic of Vietnam

Nguyễn Tấn Dung
Prime Minister
1 Hoang HoaTham Street
Hanoi
Socialist Republic of Vietnam

CHINA

We featured the arrest of **GUO QUAN** in our summer 2008 issue. Guo was arrested on May 17, 2007, apparently as a result of his articles criticizing the government response to the May 12 earthquake in Sichuan province. He was released shortly thereafter, but rearrested on November 13, 2008, on charges of “subversion of state power,” on the basis of online articles he had published and for founding the opposition China New Democracy Party. Guo is a former judge and literature professor at Nanjing Normal University. After being found guilty, Guo was sentenced on October 16, 2009, to 10 years in prison and 3 years of deprivation of political rights.

Appeals to:

His Excellency Jiang Zemin
President of the People’s Republic of
China
Zhong Nhai, Beijingshi 100032
People’s Republic of China

Salutation: Your Excellency

TUNISIA

MOHAMMED SOUDANI, a member of the General Union of Tunisian Students, was arrested on October 22, 2009, following a meeting with journalists three days before the presidential elections in Tunisia—a period in which several journalists, human rights, and civil society activists were harassed, physically assaulted, and detained on trumped up charges. Soudani is an active member of the General Union of Tunisian Students (UGET). He was previously arrested in June 2007 and given a six-month suspended prison sentence, and has since said that he was tortured during the 12 days in which he was detained. In the same year, he was expelled from the university because of his activism with the UGET. Following his arrest, during which he claimed to have been beaten, Soudani was detained incommunicado for almost three

weeks in Mornaguia Prison, on the outskirts of the Tunisian capital of Tunis, before his family was permitted to visit him in November, 2009. Security officers informed Soudani's family of his whereabouts on November 9. Mohammed Soudani has stated that he had been arrested on October 22 by state security officers and was beaten up during the arrest. He was taken to a doctor by the security officers, who feared he had been seriously injured in the beating. After being examined and treated for minor injuries, he was then taken to Mornaguia Prison without being interrogated. Mohammed Soudani was presented before a judge on October 24, who interrogated him without the presence of his lawyer. According to Amnesty International, he was convicted on October 31 after an unfair trial, in which he had no legal representation, on charges of drunkenness, disorderly behavior, and harming public morality. He was sentenced to four months' imprisonment and he has now lodged an appeal against the sentence.

Appeals to:

President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali
Palais Présidentiel
Tunis
Tunisia
Fax: + 216 71 744 721

Minister of Justice and Human Rights
Béchir Tekkari
Ministry of Justice and Human Rights
31 Boulevard Bab Benat
1006 Tunis - La Kasbah
Tunisia
Fax: + 216 71 568 106

Salutation: Your Excellency

Salutation: Your Excellency

UPDATES

The following previously featured scholars remain in prison:

CHINA

LU XIAOBO, a Chinese writer and human rights activist, arrested in December 2008 for “inciting subversion of state power.”

DR. LÜ GENGSONG, a Chinese writer, activist, and former university teacher, arrested in the summer of 2007 on charges of “incitement to

subvert state power” and “illegally possessing state secrets.”

DR. ZHENG YICHUN, Professor of English at Liaoning University in China, arrested in the winter of 2004 and charged with “suspicion of inciting subversion of state power.”

XU ZERONG, a professor affiliated with the Provincial Academy of Science and Zhongshan University in China, arrested in 2002 and charged with revealing state secrets for his use of historical materials in researching the Korean War.

Appeals to:

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

Mr. Xiao Yang
President of the Supreme People’s Court
No.27
Dongjiaominxiang Dongcheng District
Beijing 100745
People’s Republic of China

IRAQ

DR. USSAMA AL-MULLA, a professor of dentistry at Baghdad University, arrested without charge February 2008.

Appeals to:

His Excellency Nouri Kamal al-Maliki
Prime Minister
c/o Embassy of the Republic of Iraq
1801 P Street NW
Washington DC, 20036

RUSSIA

DR. IGOR SUTYAGIN, a researcher at the U.S. and Canada Institute in Moscow, arrested in Russia in Spring 2004 and sentenced to 15 years’ hard labor for treason and espionage.

Appeals to:

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

BURMA (MYANMAR)

KO AUNG HTUN, a writer and former student activist, arrested in Burma in the winter of 1998 and sentenced to seventeen years' imprisonment on charges of violating state censorship and engaging in unlawful association.

Appeals to:

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

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