



Ayatollah Ali Khamenei
Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran
c/o H.E. Mr. Gholamali Khoshroo
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations
Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations
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13 November 2017

Your Excellency:

I write on behalf of the European University Association (EUA) to express grave concern over the death sentence recently issued against Dr. Ahmadreza Djalali, a scholar of disaster medicine who was arrested in April 2016 in apparent retaliation for peacefully exercising his right to academic freedom. I respectfully urge you to call on the appropriate authorities to reverse Dr. Djalali's capital sentence and ensure his release as soon as practicable.

With more than 800 members, including both universities and national rectors' conferences, the European University Association (EUA) is the largest and most comprehensive organisation representing universities in Europe.

Dr. Djalali is an Iranian-born resident of Sweden, who teaches at universities in Italy and Belgium, and whose work involves frequent international scientific collaboration. For years he has worked alongside researchers from all over the world, including Iran, to improve the operational capacity of hospitals in countries suffering from extreme poverty and affected by disasters and armed conflicts.

EUA understands that while Dr. Djalali was visiting Iran in April 2016 to participate in a series of workshops hosted by universities in Tehran and Shiraz, authorities arrested him for alleged "collaboration with hostile governments" and "acting against national security." We further understand that he was subsequently detained in Evin Prison, forced to sign a confession relating to crimes against the national security of Iran, and threatened with the charge of "enmity against God" (*moharebeh*), which carries the death sentence. Since his arrest, Dr. Djalali has allegedly been held intermittently in solitary confinement, denied access to a lawyer of his choosing, and subjected to psychological torture. Despite suffering from medical problems including kidney and heart pain, Dr. Djalali went on hunger strike in December 2016 to protest his detention; he has reportedly resumed the strike since learning of his conviction and sentence.

On October 21, 2017, Dr. Djalali was convicted and sentenced to death on a charge of "corruption on earth" (*ifsad fil-arz*). The charge apparently relates to allegations that Dr. Djalali had been paid by Israeli authorities to spy on the Iranian government. The government has disclosed no evidentiary basis for these allegations, and Dr. Djalali has disputed them, asserting that his ties to the international academic community are the bases for his prosecution.

Absent additional information that may explain these events or clarify our understanding, Dr. Djalali's continued detention, intermittent isolation, and alleged forced confession, among other factors,

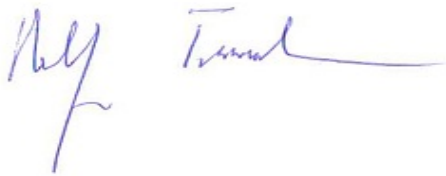
suggest a troubling disregard for international standards of academic freedom, due process, fair trial, and humane treatment of prisoners, as guaranteed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which Iran is a party.

The European University Association is gravely concerned by the ongoing harm to Dr. Djalali and his family, as well as the chilling effect that his prosecution will inevitably have upon Iran's higher education community. Dr. Djalali's prosecution is particularly troubling in light of Iran's historic role as a center of learning, and the productive relationships international universities have enjoyed with their Iranian counterparts over the years, which we hope will continue and lead to the development of further partnerships.

We therefore respectfully urge you to intervene, urging the relevant authorities to reverse Dr. Djalali's capital sentence, to ensure his unconditional release from prison, and to drop all charges against him as soon as practicable.

I appreciate your attention to this important matter and look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,



Professor Rolf Tarrach
EUA President

CC:

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