

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei
Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran
c/o H.E. Mr. Majid Takht Ravanchi
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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Your Excellency,

I write on behalf of the Association of Swedish Higher Education Institutions (SUHF) to express grave concern for the well-being of Dr. Ahmadreza Djalali, an Iranian-Swedish scholar of disaster medicine at imminent risk of execution. I respectfully urge you to call on the appropriate authorities to suspend the capital sentence issued against Dr. Amadreza Djalali and to secure his immediate release.

I understand from Scholars at Risk (SAR) that Iranian authorities recently put Dr. Djalali in solitary confinement and are preparing to carry out his death sentence at any moment. Dr. Djalali telephoned his wife on 24 November in what he said would be his last farewell.

I understand from SAR that Iranian authorities arrested Dr. Djalali in April 2016 while he was traveling to participate in a series of workshops hosted by universities in Tehran and Shiraz. On October 21, 2017, Dr. Djalali was convicted and sentenced to death for “corruption on earth” (ifsad fil-arz), based on unsubstantiated allegations that he had provided intelligence to the Israeli authorities. Dr. Djalali has disputed the allegations, asserting that his ties to the international academic community are the basis of his prosecution. Dr. Djalali teaches at universities in Italy and Belgium, including Karolinska University, in Sweden; Università degli Studi del Piemonte Orientale, in Italy; and Vrije Universiteit Brussel, in Belgium. The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention [found in a 2017 opinion](#) that he was arbitrarily detained and called for his immediate release. SAR understands that Dr. Djalali has been denied the right to appeal his conviction and sentence.

According to his family, Dr. Djalali has been subjected to torture and solitary confinement while in state custody. In July 2019, Iranian authorities suddenly transferred Dr. Djalali to an undisclosed detention facility where he was threatened with immediate execution in order to obtain a forced confession. SAR further understands that Dr. Djalali has suffered from a number of severe medical complications, including gastritis, stomach ulcers, gallstones, anemia, depression, and anxiety. He is also suspected of being at high-risk of leukemia, after his bone marrow cells were found to have weakened. Despite these complications, SAR understands that authorities have repeatedly denied Dr. Djalali proper medical care.

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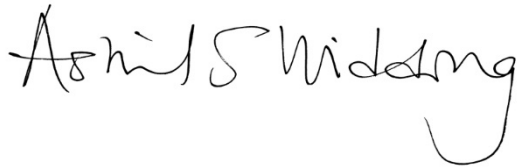
*Association of Swedish
Higher Education Institutions*

Absent additional information, the facts as described suggest that Dr. Djalali's arrest, conviction and sentencing suggest a flagrant disregard for international standards of academic freedom, 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.

I therefore respectfully urge you, on behalf of our Swedish member universities, to direct the relevant authorities to suspend the capital sentence issued against Dr. Djalali, to secure his immediate release, and, pending such action, to ensure his well-being and access to legal counsel, family, and medical treatment.

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

Sincerely,



Professor Astrid Söderbergh Widding
President, Association of Swedish Higher Education Institutions

CC:

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