

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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Via e-mail: iran@un.int
(cc: see final page)

HRK German Rectors' Conference
The President
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Germany

SUHF Sveriges universitets och
högskoleförbund
Chair of the Board
Tryckerigatan 8
YTTRANDE
111 28 Stockholm
Sweden

Immediately release Dr. Ahmadreza Djalali

29 March 2021

Your Excellency,

We write to express grave concern for the well-being of Dr. Ahmadreza Djalali, an Iranian-Swedish scholar of disaster medicine whose health has severely deteriorated and who is at imminent risk of execution. We respectfully urge you to call on the appropriate authorities to suspend the capital sentence issued against Dr. Djalali and to secure his immediate release so he may receive the dire medical care he urgently needs. We thereby strongly support the United Nations' independent human rights experts in their recent call to immediately release Dr. Djalali from prison and to end months of prolonged solitary confinement.

We understand from The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Amnesty International, and Scholars at Risk that in November 2020, Iranian authorities put Dr. Djalali in solitary confinement in preparation to carry out his death sentence. Since then, authorities have postponed the execution but have kept Dr. Djalali in solitary confinement, where his health has further deteriorated rapidly. According to UN human rights experts, Dr. Djalali is in a critical condition and near death.

The Association of Swedish Higher Education Institutions (Sveriges universitets- och högskoleförbund / SUHF) and the German Rectors' Conference (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz / HRK) are the umbrella organisations of higher education institutions in Sweden and Germany. 38 Swedish universities and university colleges are members of the SUHF. The HRK brings

together all major German universities and universities of applied sciences and has a total of 268 member institutions. The two national rectors' conferences and their member institutions believe that cooperation with Iran in the fields of science, research, and exchange holds great potential. Currently, the broad scope of cooperation ranges from the exchange of students, doctoral candidates, and senior researchers to joint research and publications.

These past achievements and the future of our cooperation are severely at risk should Iran execute Dr Ahmadreza Djalali or should he die in detention. As science organisations from Sweden and Germany, we are united in our strong belief that European-Iranian cooperation in science, research, and exchange cannot continue as before should Iranian authorities fail to suspend the death sentence against a highly-respected member of the international academic community and citizen of the European Union.

International cooperation must be firmly grounded in the standards of academic freedom and the protection of human rights. Without these principles, a successful and lasting partnership with Iran will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to uphold. We ask you to respect the foundations on which the future of Iranian-European partnership must rest. A strong and unwavering commitment to academic freedom and human rights must be at the very centre of our cooperation.

We therefore respectfully urge you 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.

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

Sincerely,

Professor Dr. Peter-André Alt
HRK President

Professor, Ph.D. Astrid Söderbergh Widding
SUHF Chair and
President, Stockholm University

CC:

- Scholars at Risk Network
New York, United States of America
- President Hassan Rouhani
President of the Islamic Republic of Iran
- The Honorable Ayatollah Ebrahim Raeisi
Head of the Judiciary of the Islamic Republic of Iran
- The Honorable Abdolreza Bagheri
Acting Minister, Ministry of Science, Research, and Technology
- The Honorable Stefan Löfven
Prime Minister of Sweden
- The Honorable Ann Linde
Minister for Foreign Affairs Sweden
- The Honorable Santiago Villalpando
Legal Adviser and Director of the Office of International Standards and Legal Affairs, UNESCO
- The Honorable Michelle Bachelet
United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
- Mr. Josep Borrell Fontelles
High Representative / Vice-President, European Commission
- Mr. Eamon Gilmore
EU Special Representative for Human Rights
- Ms. Cornelia Ernst
Chair of the European Parliament's Delegation for Relations with Iran
- Task Force Iran
European Union external Action Service