

The President
Prof Dr Peter-André Alt

HRK Hochschulrektorenkonferenz, Leipziger Platz 11, 10117 Berlin
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
622 Third Avenue, 34th Floor
P.O. Box 20432
NEW YORK, NY 10017, USA

Contact:
Dr Bölling
International Department

Details:
Phone: +49 228 887-128
boelling@hrk.de

Reference:
C2

(cc: see final page)

Halt execution and release Dr. Ahmadreza Djalali

26 November 2020

Your Excellency,

I write 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 Amnesty International and 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.

The German Rectors' Conference (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz / HRK) is the umbrella organisation of public and state-recognised universities in Germany. The HRK brings together all major German universities and universities of applied sciences. The HRK itself and a large number of its 268 member institutions believe that German-Iranian cooperation in the fields of science, research, and exchange holds great potential. Currently, there are 79 formal agreements between higher education institutions in Germany and Iran. The broad scope of cooperation ranges from the exchange of students, doctoral candidates, and senior researchers to joint research and publications. Over the last five years, in particular, we have taken significant steps towards strengthening our ties with partner institutions in Iran. We would like to build on these success stories and the positive outcomes of numerous joint initiatives, workshops, and visits of both German and Iranian delegations.

These achievements are severely at risk should Iran execute Dr Ahmadreza Djalali. I strongly believe that German-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.

As mentioned in an entire series of letters in support of Dr Djalali, 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 between Iran and Germany will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to uphold. I once again ask you to respect the foundations on which the future of Iranian-German partnership must rest. A strong and unwavering commitment to academic freedom and human rights must be at the very centre of our cooperation.

Dr Djalali's conviction, capital sentence, and the affirmation thereof, unexpected transfer, and torture – in addition to the circumstances of his arrest and confinement – 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.

I 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.

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

Sincerely,



Professor Dr. Peter-André Alt
President

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 Anna Segall
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