

Via email to: iran@un.int
Via fax to: +1 212 867-7086

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
622 Third Avenue, 34th Floor
New York, NY 10017, USA

**Appeal to Ayatollah Ali Khamenei from Norwegian University of Science and Technology
concerning Dr Ahmadreza Djalali**

Your Excellency:

I write on behalf of the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) to express grave concern over the ongoing detention and prosecution of 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 ensure his unconditional release.

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.

I understand 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.” As of this writing, the evidentiary basis of his arrest remains undisclosed. Dr. Djalali has since been detained in Evin Prison, and has reportedly been held intermittently in solitary confinement and denied access to a lawyer of his choosing. Despite suffering from medical conditions including kidney and heart pain, Dr. Djalali led a hunger strike in December 2016 to protest these conditions and seek justice.

On February 1, 2017, Dr. Djalali reported that he had been pressured to sign a statement “confessing” his involvement in espionage and crimes against the national security of Iran. When Dr. Djalali refused to sign the confession, authorities reportedly threatened to charge him with “enmity against God” (moharebeh), which carries the death sentence. Dr. Djalali is expected to return to court on August 2, 2017 for his next hearing.

Address	Org. no. 974 767 880	Location	Phone	Executive officer
7491 Trondheim Norway	postmottak@ntnu.no www.ntnu.no	Høgskoleringen 1 Hovedbygningen	+47 73595000	Ingeborg Vasli ingeborg.vasli@ntnu.no Phone: 918 97 971

Please address all correspondence to the organizational unit and include your reference.

Absent additional information that may explain these events or clarify my understanding, the continued detention of Dr. Djalali, including in intermittent isolation, and reports of a forced confession and denial of due process 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 has acceded.

As rector of the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, I am deeply concerned not only by the harm suffered by Dr. Djalali and his family, but also by the chilling effect such transgressions may have on the ability of Iran's scholars and students to peacefully study, teach, and collaborate without fear of retaliation. I further fear that such actions taken against scholars may have a negative impact on the productive relationships NTNU has enjoyed with its Iranian counterparts over the years and the development of future partnerships.

I believe that you can have a positive impact on Dr. Djalali's case. I therefore respectfully urge you to call on the relevant authorities to release and drop any charges against Dr. Djalali ahead of his August 2 hearing; or, pending such action, to ensure Dr. Djalali's well-being while in custody, including ensuring access to medical care, to legal counsel, and to family; and likewise to ensure that his case is addressed in a manner consistent with internationally recognized standards of due process, fair trial, and detention, in accordance with Iran's obligations under international law.

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

Sincerely yours,



Gunnar Bovim
Rector
Norwegian University of Science and Technology

CC:

The Honorable Ayatollah Sadeqh Larijani
Head of the Judiciary of the Islamic Republic of Iran
Howzeh Riyasat-e Qoveh Qazaiyeh
(Office of the Head of the Judiciary)
Pasteur St., Vali Asr Ave. (south of Serah-e Jomhouri) Tehran 1316814737
Islamic Republic of Iran
Email: info@dadgostary-tehran.ir

The Honorable Anna Segall
Director of the Office of International Standards and Legal Affairs, UNESCO
7 place de Fontenoy
75352 Paris 07 SP, France
Fax: +33 (0)1.45.68.55.75

The Honorable Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein
United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Email: InfoDesk@ohchr.org
Fax: +41 22.917.9022

The Honorable Federica Mogherini
High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice
President of the European Commission
European Commission
Rue de la Loi, Wetstraat 200
1049 Brussels, Belgium
Email: federica.mogherini@ec.europa.eu

The Honorable Rex Tillerson
United States Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520, USA
Fax: +1 202-647-1579

The Honorable Stefan Löfven
Prime Minister of Sweden
Rosenbad 4
SE 103 33 Stockholm, Sweden
Email: statsradsberedningen.registrator@gov.se

The Honorable Didier Reynders
Foreign Minister of Belgium
FPS Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation
Rue des Petits Carmes, 15
1000 Brussels, Belgium
Email: contact.reynders@diplobel.fed.be

The Honorable Angelino Alfano
Foreign Minister of Italy
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
Piazzale della Farnesina, 1
00135 Rome, Italy
Email: ministero.affariesteri@cert.esteri.it
Fax: +39 06 3236210