

Endangered Scholars Worldwide

BAHRAIN

DR. MASAUD JAHROMI, chair of the department of engineering at Ahlia University in Bahrain, was arrested without explanation on April 14, 2011, when Bahraini security forces removed him from his bed that evening. According to a report from the Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC), Jahromi continues to be detained without charge, has no access to a lawyer, and his family remains uninformed of his whereabouts. The chair of the IHRC has publicly expressed concern that Jahromi has been wrongfully imprisoned as part of a larger crackdown on academics that has resulted in indiscriminate arrests of Bahraini citizens without charge. Please help by urging the Bahraini government to encourage free inquiry in its intellectual community and demanding that Jahromi receives due process by asking the government to state publicly the charges against him if he is to continue to be held in detention.

AYAT AL-QUARMEZI, a student at the University of Bahrain, was arrested for reading a poem critical of the government during a pro-democracy rally, Amnesty International reported on June 12, 2011. She turned herself in to authorities on March 31, 2011, after her brothers received death threats from masked police officers. She is charged with disrupting security, taking part in illegal protests, and publicly inciting hatred toward the regime. Her poem, which she read in February 2011, was a plea to the king of Bahrain to hear his people's demands. Al-Quarmezi was allowed no external contact during the first 15 days of her detention. She also has reported that she has been beaten and tortured with electrical shocks and has been expelled from her university, along with hundreds of other student protestors.

Information current, to the best of our knowledge, as of June 22, 2011. Additional information and more current information about many of these cases may be available on our website at <http://www.newschool.edu/cps/endangered-scholars/>

Update

On June 22, 2011, **DR. ABDUL-JALIL AL-SINGACE**, professor of engineering at the University of Bahrain, was sentenced to life imprisonment by a military court on charges of training and financing a terrorist organization. Al-Singace was sentenced along with 13 other defendants, all of whom were given only restricted access to legal counsel, and whose lawyers were not allowed to be present during the prosecution's questioning of the defendants. On April 28, 2011, al-Singace's son, **ALI ABDULLAH HASAN AL-SINGACE**, was sentenced to death along with three others by a military court for their alleged involvement in the murder of a police officer during protests on March 16, 2011. Human Rights Watch has condemned the trial, which lasted less than two weeks, as failing to meet minimum standards of due process and the recognition of the defendants' rights. The date of execution has not been announced.

Appeals to:

His Highness Shaikh Khalifa Bin Salman
Al Khalifa
Prime Minister
Ministry of Foreign Affairs
P.O. Box 547
Government Road
Manama
Kingdom of Bahrain

Fax to: +973 1-753-6343
Salutation: Your Majesty

A Facebook group has been created in support of Dr. Masaud Jahromi and can be found at:
<<http://www.facebook.com/Free.Dr.Masaud.Jahromi?ref=ts>>.

BELARUS

Update

Last issue we featured two students and a lecturer who faced charges of “rioting” and “mass disturbances” following protests over the disputed Belarusian presidential election in December 2011, in which hundreds of protestors were arrested, including 11 students and a lecturer from the European Humanities University (EHU). Since then, all three situations have evolved, both for better and for worse.

The Network for Educational and Academic Rights (NEAR) reports that **ALIAKSANDER ATROSHCHANKAU**, an international law student at EHU, has been sentenced to four years in prison in a KGB jail on riot-

ing charges. **ANASTASIA PALAZHANKA**, a student of political science and European studies at EHU, had originally faced up to 15 years in jail but has now been given a 2-year “suspended sentence,” meaning that she must live under constant surveillance by authorities and is barred from leaving the country during that time. In March 2011 she was awarded the International Women of Courage Award by U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. Finally, **ALEKSANDER FETUDA**, a lecturer at EHU who was involved in Vladimir Nekiajev’s presidential election team, originally faced 5 to 15 years in prison but has also received a suspended sentence. While the punishments handed out to Palazhanka and Fetuda could have been much worse, they, like many student and political activists in Belarus, remain under threat and need your support.

Appeals to:

President of the Republic of Belarus
Alyaksandr G. Lukashenka
Karl Marx Str. 38
220016 g. Minsk
Belarus

Fax: +375 (172) 26 06 10 or
+375 (172) 22 38 72
Tel: +375 (172) 22 38 72
Email: pres@president.gov.by
Salutation: Dear President

CHINA

Update

The 13-year jail sentence of previously featured endangered scholar **DR. XU ZERONG** (Anglicized name: **DR. DAVID TSUI**), an associate research professor at the Provincial Academy of Social Sciences and an affiliated professor at Zhongshan University, has been reduced by five months, according to reports from a human rights group in China, and he is now scheduled to be released from prison on June 23, 2011.

Scholars featured in previous issues who remain in prison in China include **LIU XIAOBO**, a human rights activist and 2011 Nobel Peace Prize laureate held in an undisclosed location in Beijing since his arrest in December 2008 for “inciting subversion of state power”; **GUO QUAN**, a former literature professor at Nanjing Normal University, sentenced to 10 years in prison and 3 years of deprivation of political rights in October 2009 on charges of “inciting subversion of state

power”; LÜ GENGSONG, a Chinese writer, activist, and former university teacher, arrested in the summer of 2007 on charges of “inciting subversion of state power” and “illegally possessing state secrets”; and ZHENG YICHUN, professor of English at Liaoning University, arrested in the winter of 2004 and charged with “suspicion of inciting subversion of state power.”

Appeals to:

His Excellency Hu Jintao
President of the People’s Republic
of China
Zhong Nhaihai
Beijing 100032
People’s Republic of China
Salutation: Your Excellency

Mr. Wang Shengjun
President, Supreme People’s Court No.27
Dongjiaominxiang Dongcheng District
Beijing 100745
People’s Republic of China
Fax: +86 10 65292345 (c/o Ministry of
Communication)
Salutation: Dear President

COLOMBIA

We are pleased to report that MIGUEL ÁNGEL BELTRÁN, professor of sociology at the National University in Bogota, has been released after a two-year detention for his alleged involvement with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia (FARC). In early June 2011 a city judge dismissed all charges against him on the grounds that they were inadmissible in court.

IRAN

On May 21, 2011, in the cities of Tehran, Karaj, Isfahan, and Shiraz, a series of coordinated police raids targeted the BAHÁ’I INSTITUTE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION, leading to the arrest of 30 Baha’is. The institute is a community-led organization founded in 1987 as a nonviolent response to Iran’s “Moral Selection Regulations for University Entrance Applicants,” which state that matriculating university students must profess faith in “Islam or other recognized religions (that is, Christianity, Judaism, and Zoroastrianism).” Baha’i is regarded by the Iranian government as an illegal cult. The International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran has condemned the arrests as a blatant suppression of the Baha’i community by blocking its access to sufficient education.

Update

We are happy to report that previously featured scholar **DR. KAMIAR ALAEI**, an AIDS researcher accused of “seeking to overthrow the government,” was released from Evin Prison in Fall 2011 after serving two and a half years, including months in solitary confinement. However, his brother, **DR. ARASH ALAEI**, remains in prison. The two were sentenced to six and three years in jail, respectively, in an unorthodox, one-day trial in December 2008. Kamiar Alaei has stated that he fears his brother will face further retribution in Evin if he openly criticizes the regime of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

Previously featured scholars from Iran who remain in prison include **MAHDIEH GOLROO**, a student activist and member of the Right to Education Council in Tehran, currently serving a sentence of two years and four months in Evin Prison on charges of “propaganda against the regime,” “congregation and mutiny,” and cooperation with the Mojahedin Khalq Organization, an outlawed political group; **EMADED-DIN BAGHI**, a well-known Iranian scholar and human rights defender who re-entered prison in February 2011 for a seven-year sentence; **MAJID TAVAKOLI**, **BAHAREH HEDAYAT**, and **MILAD ASADI**, distinguished student activists sentenced to eight and a half, nine and a half, and seven years, respectively, for their involvement in antigovernment protests in 2009; **DR. MOSTAFA ALAVI**, an Iranian doctor and researcher sentenced to 15 years in August 2008 for “plotting against the regime”; and **BEHROOZ JAVID-TEHRANI**, a student activist and prisoners’ rights campaigner, who was sentenced to seven years in jail in 2005. All are at risk of torture and need your support.

Appeals to:

His Excellency
Ayatollah Sayed ‘Ali Khamenei
Leader of the Islamic Republic
The Office of the Supreme Leader
Islamic Republic Street–
Shahid Keshvar Doust Street
Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran

E-mail: info@leader.ir
Salutation: Your Excellency

Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi
Head of the Judiciary
Howzeh Riyasat-e Qoveh Qazaiyeh /
Office of the Head of the Judiciary
Pasteur St., Vali Asr Ave.,

South of Serah-e Jomhour
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
E-mail: info@dadgostary-tehran.ir
(In the subject line write: FAO Ayatollah
Shahrودي)
Salutation: Your Excellency

IRAQ

According to a report from the Network for Education and Academic Rights (NEAR), Iraqi academics have increasingly become the targets of a wave of violent acts and assassinations in February, March, and April 2011. The Iraqi academic community has grown concerned over what is apparently a targeted attack on intellectuals by insurgents and sectarian death squads, and has criticized the government for failure to protect its country's academics. In an April 21, 2011, report, NEAR highlighted five victims of this recent wave of attacks: **ALI SHALASH**, professor at the College of Veterinary Medicine in Baghdad, killed by unidentified men who broke into his house on February 17, 2011; **SAAD ABDULJABBAR**, professor at the Technological University in Baghdad, shot and killed in his car by unidentified men on February 26, 2011; **MOHAMMED ALWAN**, dean of the Faculty of Medicine at Al-Mustansiriya University and a prominent surgeon, killed by a roadside bomb attached to his car on March 29, 2011; **ZAID ABDUL MUNIM**, head of research at the Molecular Department at Al-Mustansiriya University, killed when a bomb exploded under his car on April 3, 2011; and **YASSER AHMED CHET**, associate dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Mosul, shot down by unidentified gunmen on April 9, 2011. Members of the Iraqi academic community are at continued risk of being singled out for violent attacks.

Appeals to:

His Excellency Nouri Kamal al-Maliki
Prime Minister
c/o Embassy of the Republic of Iraq
1801 P Street, N.W.
Washington DC, 20036

MALAWI

A series of student protests concerning threats to academic freedom were met with violent opposition, arrests of students, and the closing of two university campuses, beginning February 2011. **DR. BLESSINGS CHINSINGA**, an associate professor political science at Chancellor College, was summoned by the inspector general of police to account for political remarks he reportedly made in class. Lecturer strikes and demands by university professors failed to bring about an apology, and Malawi's president, who serves as both chancellor of the University of Malawi and commander-in-chief of the Malawi Police Service, publicly supported the inspector general. Student demonstrations led to a violent crackdown, the arrest of several students, and, finally, to the closing, on April 1, of Chancellor College and the Polytechnic, both parts of the University of Malawi. On April 4, Dr. Chinsinga was reportedly fired from his position.

Appeals to:

His Excellency Ngwazi Dr Bingu wa
Mutharika
President of the Republic of Malawi
Private Bag 301
Lilongwe, Malawi
Phone: +265 1 789311 / 411
Fax: +265 1 788456 / +265 1 789273

Professor Arthur Peter Mutharika
Minister of Education, Science and
Technology
Capital Hill
Private Bag 328
Lilongwe, Malawi
Phone: +265-1-78-9382 / +265 1 789422
Fax: +265-1-78-8064

SAUDI ARABIA

According to an April 2011 report from Human Rights Watch, March and April 2011 saw approximately 160 dissidents arrested, including **NADHIR AL-MAJID**, a teacher and writer, who was detained by domestic intelligence services at his school in Riyadh on April 17, 2011, while officials searched his home. The arrest came soon after the April 2, 2011, appearance of an article authored by al-Majid entitled, "I Protest, Therefore I Am," in which he criticized the Saudi government, saying that with its "call to stop demonstrations, we see history bypassing us, and this speaks volumes to the ingrained blindness in political vision, analysis, and consciousness."

Previously featured scholars from Saudi Arabia who remain in prison include university professors SA'UD AL-DUGHAITHIR, MUHAMMAD BIN NASIR AL-GHAMIDI, and ABD AL-KARIM AL-KHADHAR, all members of a group of nine intellectuals who drafted a party proposal seeking to create what would have been the first political party in Saudi Arabia. Political parties are illegal in Saudi Arabia. All were arrested on February 16, 2011.

Appeals to:

His Royal Highness Prince Naif bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud
Ministry of the Interior
P.O. Box 2933
Airport Road
Riyadh 11134
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: +966 1 403 1185

Mr. Turki bin Khaled Al-Sudairy
President
Human Rights Commission
P.O. Box 58889
Riyadh 11515
King Fahad Road
Building No. 373
Riyadh Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: +966 1 4612061

His Royal Highness Prince Saud al-Faisal bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Nasseriya Street
Riyadh 11124
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Fax: +966 1 403 0645
Fax: +966 1 461 2061

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

DR. NASSER BIN GHAITH, a scholar and lecturer of economics at the Abu Dhabi branch of France's Paris-Sorbonne University, was detained on April 10, 2011, and is being held in an undisclosed location. The government has not made any public statement concerning specific charges against Dr. bin Ghaith. According to reports, the detention is in connection with criticisms made by Dr. bin Ghaith of government officials' failure to make significant political reforms. The UAE must either state legitimate charges against bin Ghaith or release him immediately.

Appeals to:

Vice-President and Prime Minister Shaikh
Mohammad bin Rashid Al- Maktoum
Co-Chair of the Higher National Security
Council
Office of the Prime Minister
POB 2838
Dubai, UAE
Fax: +971 4 3531974

Email through Web: [http://www.uaepm.ae/en/communi cate/index.html](http://www.uaepm.ae/en/communi%20cate/index.html)
(1st*=Full name; 2nd*=Age;
3rd*=Nationality; 4th*=Place of

Work; 5th*=Email; 6th*=Type of
Communication – select “Suggestion”;
7th*=Subject; 8th*=Message)
Salutation: Your Highness

Lt-General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al-
Nahyan
Minister of Interior
Human Rights Directorate
POB: 398,
Abu Dhabi, UAE
Fax: +971 4 3981119
Salutation: Your Excellency

THE FOLLOWING PREVIOUSLY FEATURED SCHOLARS REMAIN IN PRISON:

BURMA (MYANMAR)

KO AUNG HTUN, a writer and former student activist, was arrested in Burma in the winter of 1998 and sentenced to 17 years’ imprisonment on charges of violating state censorship and engaging in unlawful association.

Appeals to:

Senior General Than Shwe
Chairman State Peace and Development
Council
Ministry of Defense
Naypyitaw
Union of Myanmar
(for US Postal Service, “Burma” should
appear in parentheses after “Myanmar”
on envelope only, not in the letter itself)

Salutation: Dear Senior General
Minister Counselor U Myint Lwin
Chargé d’Affaires
Ad Interim Embassy of Myanmar
2300 S Street, NW
Washington, DC 20008
Salutation: Dear Sir

CAMEROON

JUSTICE M. MBUH, a lecturer at the National Polytechnic Bambei in Bamenda Cameroon, was arrested in September 2009 following accusations of “treason.” He remains in prison awaiting sentencing.

Appeals to:

His Excellency Paul Biya
President of the Republic of Cameroon
Yaoundé, Cameroon
Fax: (237) 22 20 33 06
Email: cellcom@prc.cm
Salutation: Your Excellency

RUSSIA

SVYATOSLAV BOBYSHEV and **YEVGENY AFANASYEV**, both professors at Baltic State Technical University in St. Petersburg, have been detained without formal charges or trial since March 2010. The professors are accused of spying and passing state secrets to China.

Appeals to:

Dmitry Medvedev
President of Russia
Ilinka Str, No. 23
Moscow 103132
Russia

VIETNAM

TRAN KHAI THANH THUY, a novelist and essayist, was arrested in October 2009 after she publicly defended six dissidents facing trial. In February 2010 she was sentenced to 42 months in prison.

PHAM MINH HOANG, a mathematics lecturer at Ho Chi Minh City Polytechnic Institute, was arrested on August 13, 2010, on charges of participating in a banned pro-democracy opposition group, the Viet Tan. Professor Hoang was taken to an undisclosed location, where he has been since held without access to family or his lawyer.

Appeals to:

His Excellency Nguyễn Minh Triết
President of the Socialist Republic of
Vietnam
c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Hanoi
Socialist Republic of Vietnam
Salutation: Your Excellency

Nguyễn Tấn Dũng
Prime Minister
1 Hoang HoaTham Street
Hanoi
Socialist Republic of Vietnam
Salutation: Your Excellency

SOURCES:

Amnesty International <<http://www.amnesty.org/>>

English PEN <<http://www.englishpen.org/writersinprison/>>

Human Rights in China <<http://www.hrichina.org/>>

Human Rights Watch (HRW) <<http://www.hrw.org/>>

The International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran <<http://www.iran-humanrights.org/>>

Islamic Human Rights Commission <<http://www.ihrc.org/>>

Network for Education and Academic Rights (NEAR) <<http://www.nearinternational.org/>>

Scholars at Risk (SAR) <<http://scholarsatrisk.nyu.edu/>>

—Written by Matt Congdon