

Endangered Scholars Worldwide

In each issue of Social Research we publish the names and details of scholars, researchers, and students who have been threatened or imprisoned, along with ways to offer them support. Social Research was founded by a group of scholars known as “The University in Exile,” refugees from Nazi Europe who found a home at The New School. We see this effort as consistent not only with our own history as a journal but with the need to call attention to the increasing and often brutal attempts to silence our colleagues around the world.

If you are aware of a scholar or student whose case you believe we should investigate, please contact us at socres@newschool.edu.

SCHOLARS AND RESEARCHERS: NEW AND CONTINUING CASES

BAHRAIN

JALILA AL-SALMAN and **MAHDI ‘ISSA MAHDI ABU DHEEB**, both board members of the Bahrain Teachers Association, were arrested on charges of “inciting hatred against the regime” and “calling to overthrow and change the regime by force” following the group’s call for a teacher strike in March 2011. According to reports from Amnesty International, al-Salman was held in solitary confinement after her arrest and subject to about a week of beatings. Their trial, which began before a military court in June 2011, resumed on September 25, 2011.

DR. ABDUL-JALIL AL-SINGACE, a previously featured professor of engineering at the University of Bahrain, began a hunger strike on September 2, 2011, along with several other prisoners to protest their imprisonment and the frequency of arbitrary detentions and unfair

Information current, to the best of our knowledge, as of September 19, 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/>

trials in Bahrain. Al-Singace suffers from various ailments that heighten the seriousness of the risk to his health that a hunger strike poses. He was sentenced to life imprisonment on June 22, 2011, on charges of training and financing a terrorist organization.

A previously featured scholar from Bahrain who remains detained without charge is **DR. MASAUD JAHROMI**, chairman of the department of telecommunications engineering, arrested without explanation on April 14, 2011.

Appeals to:

His Majesty Shaikh Hamad bin Issa Al
Khalifa
King of Bahrain
Office of His Majesty the King
P. O. Box 555
Rifa'a Palace, Kingdom of Bahrain
Fax: + 973 1766 8884

His Excellency Shaikh Khalid bin Ali
Al Khalifa
Ministry of Justice and Islamic Affairs
Diplomatic Area
P.O. Box 450
Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain
Fax: +973 1753 6343

His Excellency Dr Majid bin Ali Al-Naimi
Minister of Education
Ministry of Education Building
Al Istiklal Street
P.O. Box 43
Isa Town Central, Kingdom of Bahrain
Fax: +973 1768 7866

Facebook group in support of Dr. Masaud
Jahromi: <[http://www.facebook.com/
Free.Dr.Masaud.Jahromi](http://www.facebook.com/Free.Dr.Masaud.Jahromi)>

CHINA

Writer and editor **TASHI RABTEN** (pen name Te'urang) was sentenced to four years' imprisonment on June 2, 2011, for his critical political writings. He was arrested on April 6, 2010, and detained without charge until the trial, which took place behind closed doors. He is coeditor of a banned Tibetan-language magazine and author of a book and several articles critical of the Chinese government.

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 three years of deprivation of political rights in October 2009 on charges of “inciting subversion of state power”; 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

Facebook group in support of Liu Xiaobo:
<<http://www.facebook.com/Free.Liu>>

IRAN

Between August 2 and 12, 2011, four cultural and literary activists were arrested as part of a crackdown in Gilan-e-Gharb in Kermanshah Province. Security forces first arrested **JAMAL KHANI**, a poet, **FARHAD VAKILINIA**, an educator, and **NAEEM NAJAFI**, a student. The reasons for their arrests and detentions remain unknown. **SAJJAD JAHANFAR**, a Kurdish author and scholar, was arrested on August 12, 2011, and is being held without charge. Jahanfar has not been allowed to contact or see his family while in detention.

Religious scholar **AHMAD GHABEL** reentered jail on July 31, 2011, to begin a 20-month sentence. He was arrested on September 8, 2010, on charges of acting against the regime and national security and was sentenced to three years’ imprisonment, three years of exile from his city of residence, and a three-year ban on giving speeches.

Last issue we featured a set of arrests targeting the Baha’i Institute for Higher Education in May 2011, but at the time did not have any information regarding specific individuals arrested. We have learned from Scholars at Risk that one of the dozens of faculty and staff arrested was **RAMIN ZIBAEI**, a psychology specialist and dean of

the institute in Tehran, who remains in detention. The institute is a community-led organization founded in 1987 as a nonviolent response to the Iranian government's denial of higher education to members of the Baha'i faith, which is regarded by the authorities as an illegal cult.

A previously featured scholar from Iran who remains in prison is **DR. MOSTAFA ALAVI**, an Iranian doctor and researcher sentenced to 15 years in August 2008 for "plotting against the regime."

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

RUSSIA

SVYATOSLAV BOBYSHEV and **YEVGENY AFANASYEV**, professors at Baltic State Technical University in St. Petersburg Russia, both remain in prison. They 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
103132, Moscow, Russia

SAUDI ARABIA

DR. YUSUF AL-AHMAD, as Islamic scholar who teaches at Imam Muhammad bin Sa'ud University in Riyadh, was arrested after posting a YouTube video critical of long-term detentions of security suspects

without due juridical process. The arrest came on July 8, 2011, one day after the video was posted. Saudi authorities have yet to state specific charges against al-Ahmad.

Previously featured scholars from Saudi Arabia who remain in prison include **NADHIR AL-MAJID**, a teacher and writer, detained on April 17, 2011, soon after the appearance of an article in which he criticized the Saudi government; and university professors **SA'UD AL-DUGHATHIR**, **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, 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 arrest came after his criticisms of government officials' failure to make significant political reforms.

Appeals to:

Vice-President and Prime Minister Shaikh Mohammad bin Rashid Al- Maktoum	Lt-General Sheikh Saif bin Zayed Al-Nahyan
Co-Chair of the Higher National Security Council	Minister of Interior
Office of the Prime Minister	Human Rights Directorate
POB 2838	POB: 398,
Dubai	Abu Dhabi
UAE	UAE
Fax: +971 4 3531974	Fax: +971 4 3981119
Email through Web: http://www.uaepm.ae/en/communi cate/index.html	Salutation: Your Excellency
(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	

VIETNAM

Featured scholar **PHAM MINH HOANG**, a blogger and lecturer of mathematics at Ho Chi Minh City Polytechnic Institute, was sentenced on August 10, 2011, to three years in jail and three years of house arrest for belonging to Viet Tan, a banned pro-democracy group, and publishing an anti-communist blog. Pham’s supporters claim that his arrest and detention are the result of his criticisms of the Vietnamese government for its decision to license controversial Chinese-run bauxite mines in Vietnam’s central highlands.

A previously featured scholar who remains in prison is **TRAN KHAI THANH THUY**, a novelist and essayist arrested in October 2009 after she publicly defended six dissidents facing trial. In February 2010 she was sentenced to 42 months in prison.

Appeals to:

His Excellency Nguyễn Minh Triết	Nguyễn Tấn Dung
President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam	Prime Minister
c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs	1 Hoang HoaTham Street
Hanoi	Hanoi
Socialist Republic of Vietnam	Socialist Republic of Vietnam
Salutation: Your Excellency	Salutation: Your Excellency

ENDANGERED STUDENTS: NEW AND CONTINUING CASES

This issue we are introducing a new category in Endangered Scholars Worldwide that will focus on students from around the world who have been persecuted, barred from school, or put in prison as a result of the peaceful expression of their views through protests and other forums. While our previous format included student cases alongside other scholars, the increasing numbers of students under threat demanded that we highlight their unique plight as student protestors. The general format and information for appeals will remain the same as our now separate section for scholars and researchers above.

BELARUS

ALIAKSANDER ATROSHCHANKAU, an international law student at the European Humanities University featured in an earlier issue of *Social Research*, was sentenced in the spring of 2011 to four years in prison on charges of inciting rioting following protests over the disputed Belarusian presidential election in December 2011. His case remains the same.

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

BURMA (MYANMAR)

KO AUNG HTUN, a writer and former student activist, remains in prison. He 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

CHAD

Two students, **BEBKIKA PASSOUA ALEXIS** and **NEDOUMBAYEL NEKAOU**, have been held for four months and now face trial for allegedly planning pro-democracy protests. They were arrested in May 2011 after distributing pamphlets calling for peaceful demonstrations against the Chadian regime. Amnesty International reports that both faced torture while in custody, and their health has deteriorated since their imprisonment.

Appeals to:

His Excellency Idriss Deby Itno
President of the Republic of Chad
BP 74 N’Djamena
Republic of Chad
Tel: +235 51 44 37
Fax: +235 51 45 01
Email: sgpr.tchad@intnet.td

Dr. Abdoulaye Sabre Fadoul
Minister of Justice Ministry of Justice
BP 426 N’Djamena
Republic of Chad
Tel: +235 52 21 72 / 52 51 78
Fax: +235 52 51 81
Email: cs.tchad@intnet.td

CHILE

MANUEL GUTIÉRREZ, a 16-year-old student, was shot in the chest and killed during a political protest on August 25, 2011. Ballistics experts have determined that a police sergeant shot the bullet that struck Gutiérrez. Amnesty International has expressed concern and urged that the case be seen by a civilian judge rather than a military judge, since military courts have shown partiality in previous cases involving police and military defendants.

Appeals to:

Chilean Embassy
Ambassador Andres Bianchi
1732 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20036
Tel: 202 785 1746
Email: embassy@embassyofchile.org.

IRAN

SOMAYEH TOHIDLOU, a political activist and Tehran University PhD student in sociology, received a punishment of 50 lashes in Evin Prison on September 14, 2011, as a result of blogging activity and her political involvement in the 2009 presidential election. She was first arrested on June 14, 2009, two days after the presidential election, and spent 70 days in jail before her sentence was altered to 50 lashes.

ABDOLLAH MOMENI, a student activist and spokesman for Iran's largest reformist student organization, has been refused medical leave from his imprisonment in Evin Prison despite serious health concerns, according to a July 12, 2011, report from the Network for Education and Academic Rights (NEAR). Momeni suffers from serious health problems made worse by a hunger strike in June 2011. It is suspected that the medical leave was refused because of a September 2010 open letter to Ayatollah Khamenei, including allegations of torture and detailing psychological and physical abuses he experienced during his detention.

Previously featured students who remain in prison in Iran 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; **MAJID TAVAKOLI** and **BAHAREH HEDAYAT**, distinguished student activists sentenced to eight-and-a-half and nine-and-a-half years, respectively, for their involvement in anti-government protests in 2009; 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 Jomhouri
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran
E-mail: info@dadgostary-tehran.ir (In
the subject line write: FAO Ayatollah
Shahroudi) Salutation: Your Excellency

MALAWI

The Malawian Human Rights Commission delivered an official report on August 16, 2011, stating its findings that police used excessive force to deal with ongoing student protests that have taken place since February 2011. Live bullets were used, 19 people were killed, and 58 others were wounded by police. The protests are a response to a dispute concerning academic freedom at Chancellor College, part of the University of Malawi, which has resulted in the indefinite closing of the college (see our previous issue for more information).

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

Dr. George Chaponda
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

SYRIA

ISLAM AL-DABBAS AND MAJD AL-DIN KHOLANI, both students involved in organizing peaceful protests in and near Damascus since March 2011, were arrested on July 22 and August 8, 2011, respectively, and are being held incommunicado in undisclosed locations. According to reports from Amnesty International, both were beaten following their arrests and are at risk of torture.

Appeals to:

President
Bashar al-Assad
Presidential Palace
al-Rashid Street
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic
Fax: +963 11 332 3410

Minister of Interior
Major Sa'id Mohamed Samour
Ministry of Interior
'Abd al-Rahman Shahbandar Street
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic
Fax: +963 11 222 3428

GOOD NEWS: RELEASES

BAHRAIN

AYAT AL-QUARMEZI, a student activist and poet featured in our previous issue, was released from prison and placed under house arrest on July 13, 2011. The charges against her have not been dropped and she reports that she was beaten in custody and mistreated during her interrogation. She was released along with 200 other prisoners by the Bahraini government in the wake of violent clashes between protestors and authorities that saw thousands arrested and dozens killed.

IRAN

EMADEDIN BAGHI, a previously featured scholar and human rights defender, was released from prison on June 20, 2011, after completing the second segment of a two-year sentence. Baghi's conflict with Iranian authorities began a decade ago with his investigations into murders of Iranian intellectuals.

On August 27, 2011, a large number of student activists were pardoned by Ayatollah Khamenei and released after many years in jail as part of celebrations for the holiday Eid al-Fitr. Among those released was previously featured scholar **DR. ARASH ALAEI**. Alaei and his brother, **DR. KAMIAR ALAEI**, both AIDS researchers and community activists, had been sentenced to three and six years in jail, respectively, in an unorthodox, one-day trial in December 2008 on charges of "seeking to overthrow the government."

Also released as part of the pardon was previously featured scholar and student activist **MILAD ASADI**. While opposition groups welcomed

the release of the political prisoners, they criticized the move as deceptive, insofar as most of those pardoned were due to be released in a short time regardless of the pardon.

SOURCES:

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

Bahrain Center for Human Rights <<http://www.bahrainrights.org/en>>

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