

Endangered Scholars Worldwide

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. In each issue we publish the names and details of scholars, researchers, and students who have been threatened or imprisoned, along with ways to offer them support. 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.

We urge readers to write letters on behalf of these scholars, researchers, and students. Sample letters can be found on our website at www.newschool.edu/cps/endangered-scholars.

If you are aware of a scholar or student whose case you believe we should investigate, please contact us at esw@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, received prison sentences on October 21, 2012, when an appeals court upheld their guilty verdict. They have been handed sentences of six months and five years, respectively, 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.

Information current, to the best of our knowledge, as of December 3, 2012. Additional information about many of these cases, and sample letters of protest, which can be printed out and mailed or emailed, may be found on our website at <http://www.newschool.edu/cps/endangered-scholars/>.

Previously featured scholar **DR. ABDUL-JALIL AL-SINGACE**, professor of engineering at the University of Bahrain, is reportedly weak and in deteriorating health following a hunger strike earlier this fall. He was sentenced to life imprisonment on June 22, 2011, on charges of training and financing a terrorist organization; he was reportedly tortured during his pretrial detention. He was part of a group of prisoners who engaged in a hunger strike to protest several violations and restrictions placed on prisoners, including restrictions on calls to family and lawyers, access to newspapers, and access to exercise in fresh air.

Also still in prison is previously featured scholar **RULA AL-SAFFER**, assistant professor at the College of Health Sciences and head of the Bahrain Nursing Society, who was sentenced on September 29, 2011, to 15 years in prison.

Appeals to:

His Majesty Sheikh Hamad bin Issa
Al-Khalifa
Office of His Majesty the King
P.O. Box 555
Rifa'a Palace
Kingdom of Bahrain
Fax: +973 176 64 587

Dr. Fatima Al-Balushi
Minister of Human Rights and Social
Development, Acting Minister of Health
Ministry of Human Rights and
Development
Manama
Kingdom of Bahrain

Sheikh Khalid bin Ali Al-Khalifa
Ministry of Justice and Islamic Affairs
P.O. Box 450
Al-Manama
Bahrain
Fax: +973 175 31 284

CHINA

Scholars featured in previous issues who remain in prison in China include writer and editor **TASHI RABTEN** (pen name Te'urang), sentenced to four years' imprisonment on June 2, 2011, for his critical political writings; **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"; and **GUO QUAN**,

a former literature professor at Nanjing Normal University, sentenced to ten years in prison and three years of deprivation of political rights in October 2009 on charges 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

We regretfully report that previously featured religious scholar **AHMAD GHABEL** died on October 22, 2012, while serving his prison sentence. He re-entered jail on July 31, 2011, to serve a 20-month sentence on charges of acting against the regime and national security. In addition to being a critic of the Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and Islamic theocracy, Ghabel was known for his progressive theological stance, including the claim that women are not religiously required to cover their necks and heads. He had been arrested and imprisoned several times since 2001.

Scholars from Iran who remain in prison include **ARZHANG DAVOODI**, a poet, teacher, and cofounder of the pro-Western Confederation for Iranian Students (CIS), imprisoned since October 2003; two academics and members of the Iranian Writers Association (IWA), **MANIJEH NAJM ERAGHI** and **DR. FARIBORZ RAIS DANA**, arrested on June 3 and May 21, 2012, respectively, and sentenced to one year in prison for their membership in the IWA, a group that promotes writers’ rights in Iran; **SAEED MADANI**, a sociologist and member of the Nationalist-Religious Front, held without charge since January 7, 2012; **ABDOLREZA GHANBARI**, a teacher of Persian literature currently await-

ing execution (execution date undisclosed) following political protests on December 27, 2009; **MASSOUD SEPEHR**, a political science lecturer at Shiraz Azad University, detained without charge since his arrest on November 17, 2011; seven people connected to the Baha'i Institute for Higher Education, following coordinated attacks on the Institute in May 2011, including **KAMRAN MORTEZAIE** and **VAHID MAHMOUDI**, each sentenced to five years, and **RAMIN ZIBAIE**, **MAHMOUD BADA-VAM**, **FARHAD SEDGHI**, **RIAZ SOBHANI**, and **NOUSHIN KHADEM**, each sentenced to four years; four cultural figures, all charged with "acting against national security" through supporting Kurdish opposition groups, including poet **JAMAL KHANI**, serving a two-year sentence, educator **FARHAD VAKILINIA**, serving three years, **NAEEM NAJAFI**, a student, serving four years, and Kurdish author and scholar **SAJJAD JAHANFAR**, serving one year; **PROFESSOR SAEED LEILAZ**, a journalist and professor of economics at Shahid Beheshti University, convicted in 2009 of violating public order, planning to undermine the country's security, and insulting Iran's Supreme Leader; **DR. MOHAMMAD MALEKI**, former chancellor of Tehran University, held in Evin Prison since August 2009 on charges of "propaganda against the regime"; and **DR. MOSTAFA ALAVI**, an Iranian doctor and researcher sentenced to fifteen years in August 2008 for "plotting against the regime."

Appeals to:

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali
Khamenei
The Office of the Supreme Leader
Shoahada Street
Qom
Islamic Republic of Iran

His Excellency Mahmoud Ahmadinejad
The Presidency
Palestine Avenue
Azerbaijan Intersection
Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran

Ayatollah Sadeqh Larijani
Office of the Head of the Judiciary
Pasteur St., Vali Asr Ave., south of Serah-e
Jomhuri
Tehran 1316814737
Islamic Republic of Iran

ITALY

A group of six scientists were sentenced to six years in prison on charges of manslaughter at a trial on October 22, 2012, for giving “inexact, incomplete, and contradictory information” following their failure to accurately predict an earthquake that devastated the city of L’Aquila, Italy, in 2009. Those sentenced were scientists **ENZO BOSCHI**, **FRANCO BARBERI**, **BERNARDO DE BERNARDIS**, **GIULIO SALVAGI**, **CALVI GIANMICHELE**, and **CLAUDIO EVA**. Also sentenced was **MAURO DOLCE**, the head of the seismic risk office in Rome. The international scientific community has condemned the sentences, pointing out the difficulties of predicting earthquakes and warning that the sentencing will prevent scientists from making public claims about seismology for fear of similar repercussions.

Appeals to:

Silvana Bastianello
Vice Director
Ministry of Justice

via Arenula 70
00186 Rome
Italy

JORDAN

RULA QUAWAS, a professor and dean at the University of Jordan, was fired in October 2012 in the wake of controversy created by a student film made in her feminist theory course. The film, posted on YouTube, highlighted the problem of sexual harassment faced by female students on campus. University officials defended their decision to dismiss Quawas by claiming that the video was bad for the university’s reputation.

Appeals to:

Embassy of the Hashemite Kingdom of
Jordan
3504 International Drive, N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20008
USA

RUSSIA

Previously featured scholars **SVYATOSLAV BOBYSHEV** and **YEVGENY AFANASYEV**, both professors at Baltic State Technical University



in St Petersburg, Russia, were sentenced at a closed trial in June 2012 to 12 years in prison on charges of passing secret information to the Chinese government. Previously they had been detained without formal charges or trial since March 2010. The professors are accused of spying and passing state secrets to China. The trial proceedings and verdicts have drawn criticisms from international groups such as the Committee of Concerned Scientists as well as the Russia-based Committee for the Defense of Scientists, which condemned the prosecution of the two scientists as a “witch hunt.”

Appeals to:

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

Mr. Yuriy Chaika
General Public Prosecutor of the Russian
Federation
GSP-3, 15a B. Dimitrovka Street
125993 Moscow
Russia

SAUDI ARABIA

Previously featured scholars from Saudi Arabia who remain in prison include **DR. SA’UD MUKHTAR AL-HASHIMI**, a medical doctor and faculty member at the King Abdulaziz University, sentenced in November 2011 to 30 years in prison, which is to be followed by a 30-year travel ban; **DR. YUSUF AL-AHMAD**, an Islamic scholar who teaches at Imam Muhammad bin Sa’ud University in Riyadh, arrested after posting a YouTube video critical of long-term detentions of security suspects without due juridical process; **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; they 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

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

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

TURKEY

Writer, sociologist, and feminist **PINAR SELEK** is facing retrial after being acquitted three times of the same charges, and could face life imprisonment if convicted. Selek is charged in connection with a 1998 explosion in the Istanbul Spice Bazaar, which a team of experts later concluded was the result not of a bomb but of an accidental gas ignition. According to a report from International PEN, Selek is being targeted as the result of her sociological research on Kurdish issues. She has fled the country and is scheduled to be tried in absentia in December 2012.

On October 1, 2012, the trial began for **BÜSRA ERSANLI**, a constitutional law expert and professor of political science at Marmara University in Istanbul. She faces charges of “leadership of an illegal organization,” punishable under Turkey’s Anti-Terrorism Laws. Ersanli has been outspoken about minority rights in Turkey and has offered constitutional advice to the pro-Kurdish Peace and Democracy Party (BDP).

A previously featured scholar from Turkey who remains in prison is **KEMAL GÜRÜZ**, a former university rector and retired professor at Middle East Technical University in Ankara, arrested on June 25, 2012, without charge.

Appeals to:

His Excellency Recep Tayyip Erdogan
Prime Minister of Turkey
Office of the Prime Minister
06573 Basbakanlik
Ankara Turkey
Fax: +90 312 417 04 76

His Excellency Sadullah Ergin
Minister of Justice
06669 Kizilay
Ankara, Turkey
Fax: +90 312 419 3370

ENDANGERED STUDENTS: NEW AND CONTINUING CASES

BAHRAIN

Previously featured students who remain in jail include student activist **AHMED AOUN**, arrested by authorities when he sought treatment at a hospital following an eye injury inflicted by police during protests on May 13, 2012; and six students, all sentenced to 15 years in prison at a trial on March 5, 2012, as part of a crackdown on student involvement in pro-democracy demonstrations, including **JAWAD AL-MAHARY, SHAWQI RADHI, JASSIM AL HULAINI, JASSIM AL-MUKHODHER, AND YOUSIF AHMED**. To our knowledge the name of the sixth student has not been released.

Appeals to:

His Majesty Sheikh Hamad bin Issa
Al-Khalifa
Office of His Majesty the King
P.O. Box 555
Rifa'a Palace
Kingdom of Bahrain.
Fax: +973 176 64 587

Minister of Human Rights and Social
Development, Acting Minister of Health
Ministry of Human Rights and
Development
Manama
Kingdom of Bahrain

Sheikh Khalid bin Ali Al-Khalifa
Ministry of Justice and Islamic Affairs
P.O. Box 450
Al-Manama
Bahrain
Fax: +973 175 31 284
Dr. Fatima Al-Balushi

BELARUS

ALIAKSANDER ATROSHCHANKAU, a previously featured scholar from Belarus who remains in prison, is an international law student at the European Humanities University. He 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.

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

IRAN

Previously featured student activist **BAHAREH HEDAYAT** started a hunger strike in November 2012, along with eight other women inmates at Evin Prison in Tehran, in order to protest abuses from prison guards. The women say they were subject to degrading body searches and have had their personal belongings confiscated. They intend to continue their hunger strike until they receive apologies from the guards, a guarantee that the abusive treatment will cease, and the return of their personal belongings. Hedayat is a member of the One Million Signature Campaign, which seeks to end discrimination against women in Iranian law. She is currently serving a 10-year sentence for “insulting the president,” “insulting the leader,” and “gathering and colluding to commit crimes against national security.”

A set of “Islamicization” regulations at Iranian universities enacted this academic year, which began on September 22, 2012, include restrictions of enrollment in certain majors to a single gender. The move to “single-gender” majors includes restrictions on both men and women, but has excluded women in particular from majoring in fields that result in highest-paying jobs for graduates, such as technical and applied sciences. Thirty-six universities across the country have banned women from majoring in seventy-seven different fields. Men

have been banned at Esfahan University from majoring in history, philosophy, linguistics, and several other fields. The regulations violate the right to education without discrimination, guaranteed under several international agreements to which Iran is signatory, including a UN convention against discrimination in education.

ABDOLFAZL TABARZADI, a student and human rights activist, was released in November 2012 from Karoon Prison after serving six months, having been deemed psychologically unfit to serve his sentence. He currently suffers from severe psychological problems and is being treated by his family, who says the problems are the result of his interrogations and treatment in the prison. Prison officials claim they do not know what happened to Tabarzadi, and his family has been threatened to prevent their speaking to the media, according to the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran.

Previously featured student **ABDOLLAH MOMENI**, a student activist and spokesman for Iran's largest reformist student organization, currently serving a sentence in Evin Prison, has been denied visitation rights for the past year and a half. In an interview with the International Campaign for Human Rights in Iran, Momeni's wife, Fatemeh Adinehvand, reported that she and her children have not been allowed to visit in person and that he has been denied a furlough. The loss of Momeni's visitations rights came after he wrote a letter to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei describing his torture during interrogations.

Previously featured students from Iran who remain in prison include **OMID KOKABEE**, a PhD student in physics, sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment in July 2012 on charges of communicating with a hostile government and taking illegal earnings; **MOHSEN SANATIPOUR**, a student activist and journalist, sentenced to one year in prison in Spring 2012; **ABOLFAZL TABARZADI**, a civil engineering student and human rights activist, serving nine months since October 2011 after being convicted of "acting against national security" and "contact with foreign media"; student activist **JAVAD ALIKHANI**, arrested on May 28, 2010, and charged with "propagating against the regime," "acting against national security," "blasphemy," and "insulting the Supreme

Leader”; **ABDOLLAH MOMENI**, a student activist and spokesman for Iran’s largest reformist student organization currently in Evin Prison; **SOROUGH SABET**, serving a two-year sentence in connection with his involvement in protests in 2007; **LEVA KHANJANI**, a member of the persecuted Baha’i religious minority, banned from receiving further education and serving a two-year sentence in connection with her involvement in protests in 2009; **NASIM SOLTAN BEIGI**, serving a six-year sentence for “propaganda against the regime” and “assembly and collusion against national security”; and **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 antigovernment protests in 2009. All are at risk of torture and need your support.

Appeals to:

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed ‘Ali Khamenei	Jomhouri
The Office of the Supreme Leader	Tehran 1316814737
Shoahada Street	Islamic Republic of Iran
Qom	His Excellency Mahmoud Ahmadinejad
Islamic Republic of Iran	The Presidency
	Palestine Avenue
Ayatollah Sadeqh Larijani	Azerbaijan Intersection
Howzeh Riyasat-e Qoveh Qazaiyeh (Office of the Head of the Judiciary)	Tehran
Pasteur St., Vali Asr Ave., south of Serah-e	Islamic Republic of Iran

LAOS

Students protestors **THONGPASEUTH KEUAKOUN**, **SENG-ALOUN PHENG-PHANH**, and **BOUAVANH CHANHMANIVONG** remain in prison following their arrest on charges of treason in 1999 for displaying posters during a demonstration that called for economic, political, and social change.

Appeals to:

President Choummaly Sayasone
Office of the President
Vientiane
Laos

GOOD NEWS: RELEASES

CHINA

DR. JIAO GUOBIAO, a writer and former associate professor at Beijing University's College of Journalism and Communications, was released after two weeks' imprisonment in September 2012. He was arrested on "suspicion of inciting subversion of state power" after publishing an article critical of the government that called attention to Chinese policies regarding land disputes with Japan. He remains under strict surveillance.

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.iranhumanrights.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