

Der Präsident
Univ.-Prof. Dr. Peter-André Alt

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Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Bearb.-Zeichen IV B

Bearbeiter Dr. Stefan Rummel

Zimmer 23

c/o H.E. Mr. Gholamali Khoshroo

Berlin, 4.5.2018

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

CC: President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Head of the Judiciary of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Director of the Office of International Standards and Legal Affairs of UNESCO, High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the European Commission, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, United States Secretary of State, Prime Minister of Sweden, Foreign Minister of Belgium, Foreign Minister of Italy, and Scholars at Risk

Your Excellency,

I write as President of Freie Universität Berlin to express grave concern for the health and well-being of Dr. Ahmadreza Djalali, who has been refused medical care in prison. I respectfully urge you to call on the appropriate authorities to immediately release Dr. Djalali on medical parole.

I understand from Scholars at Risk (SAR) 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." Dr. Djalali was subsequently detained in Evin Prison, forced to sign a confession relating to crimes against the national security of Iran, and threatened with the charge of "enmity against God" (moharebeh), which carries the

death sentence. Since his arrest, Dr. Djalali has been held intermittently in solitary confinement, denied access to a lawyer of his choosing, and subjected to psychological torture. On October 21, 2017, Dr. Djalali was convicted and sentenced to death on a charge of “corruption on earth” (ifsad fil-arz). The charge reportedly relates to allegations that Dr. Djalali had been paid by the Israeli authorities to spy on the Iranian government. The government has disclosed no evidentiary basis for these allegations, and Dr. Djalali has disputed them, asserting that his ties to the international academic community are the bases for his prosecution.

I further understand from SAR that, despite his clear intention to do so, Dr. Djalali was stripped of the right to appeal the decision against him. Specifically, as is normal practice, Dr. Djalali’s lawyers contacted the Supreme Court following his conviction to learn which branch of the court would be hearing the case and receiving any appellate filings. They were repeatedly informed that the case had not yet been assigned to a branch, and that they should await further instruction. On December 9, 2017, however, his lawyers learned that the Supreme Court summarily affirmed Dr. Djalali’s sentence. On February 4, 2018, it was reported that Iran’s Supreme Court had denied a recent request to review Dr. Djalali’s case. His lawyer has commented that the sentence can now be carried out at any time.

Compounding these due process concerns are reports that Dr. Djalali is facing increasing health complications, including diarrhea, weight loss, and a possible tumor. Despite these health risks, authorities have reportedly denied him access to proper medical treatment.

Absent additional information that may explain these events or clarify my understanding, Dr. Djalali’s conviction, capital sentence, and the affirmation thereof – 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 ask you to intervene, urging the relevant authorities to immediately release Dr. Djalali on medical parole.

Finally, I would like to point out that Freie Universität Berlin is training right now a significant number of Iranian doctoral students. In addition, my university has always welcomed academic delegations and scholars from Iran on its campus and is keen to intensify the collaboration with Iran’s renowned universities. However, our very name

“Freie Universität” and our motto “Truth, Justice, Freedom” oblige me to raise my voice and remind Iran of its own obligations under the treaties mentioned above. If Iran wants its universities to be acknowledged as equals by its academic peers in the free world, it has to respect the values of academic freedom.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P. Alt', written in a cursive style.

Univ.-Prof. Dr. Peter-André Alt
President
Freie Universität Berlin