



***Committee on International Freedom of Scientists
of the American Physical Society***
One Physics Ellipse, College Park, Maryland 20740, USA

CIFS 2014

2 December 2014

Chair

HERBERT L. BERK

University of Texas at Austin

ALESSANDRA BUONANNO

*University of Maryland,
College Park*

JOHN GILLESPIE

C.U.N.Y.

KOTIK LEE

SAMUEL MARKSON

*Harvard-Smithsonian Center for
Astrophysics*

PETER S. RISEBOROUGH

Temple University

MARGARITA RYUTOVA

*Lawrence Livermore National
Laboratory*

HOSSEIN SADEGHPOUR

*Harvard-Smithsonian Center for
Astrophysics*

PETER SCHMELCHER

University of Hamburg

VLADIMIR ZELEVINSKY

Michigan State University

Liaisons from the APS:

AMY K. FLATTEN

Director of International Affairs

MICHELE IRWIN

*International Programs
Administrator*

Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani
Head of the Judiciary
c/o Public Relations Office
Number 4, 2 Azizi Street intersection
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Your Excellency,

I write to you on behalf of the American Physical Society's (APS) Committee on International Freedom of Scientists (CIFS) regarding several educators from the Baha'i Institute of Higher Education (BIHE) who were arrested and detained in a raid of over 30 homes in May 2011. The APS is a non-governmental organization dedicated to the advancement of physics. The Society is the largest organization of physicists in the United States with over 50,000 members worldwide. CIFS is charged by the APS with monitoring the rights of scientists, to insure that they may freely pursue the knowledge that can be of benefit to their countries as well as to the global community and humanity.

CIFS has followed the situation concerning the educators of the BIHE for several years. We are troubled that individuals who have committed themselves to educating Baha'i youth in Iran have been imprisoned solely for their religious beliefs. We do not understand why any group of people, who because of their religious beliefs, should be restricted from participating in the secular activities of the country they reside in. This freedom of participation, which is independent of religious belief, is a tenet of the U.N.'s Declaration of Human Rights, for which Iran is a signatory. Iran's restrictive treatment of the Baha'i community is also counter to the Golden Rule, adhered to by the world's principal religions including the Moslem religion, which is to treat your neighbor as you would want your neighbor to treat you.

In March 2012, CIFS wrote to the Iranian government to urge it to reconsider its policy of barring Baha'is from pursuing education and to release the imprisoned BIHE educators. Today, we write to reiterate this request. Iran's Baha'i community has a lot to offer to Iran and Iran has much to gain from a population that is fully free to pursue higher education. Hence, we call on the Iranian government to unconditionally release from prison the following educators who are still detained:

Mahmoud Badavam, Faran Hesami, Nooshin Khadem, Kamran Mortezaie, Amanollah Mostaghim, Foad Moghaddam, Shahin Negari, Kamran Rahimian, Kayvan Rahimian, Farhad Sedghi, Riaz Sobhani, and Ramin Zibaie.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Herbert L. Berk". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'H' and 'B'.

Herbert L. Berk
Chair, Committee on International Freedom of Scientists

Cc: Mr. Mohammad Farhadi, Minister of Education
Mohammad Javad Larijani, Head of the Human Rights Council in the Judiciary
Gholamhossein Dehghani, Ambassador and Charge d'Affaires a.i. of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations