

Dear SAR friends,

Scholars at Risk circulates alerts to raise awareness about attacks on scholars, students and university communities worldwide. Scholars at Risk requests that letters, emails, or faxes of support be sent in especially urgent cases. Below find an alert about the recent death in detention of Akbar Mohammadi, a former university student at Tehran University, as well as his brother Manuchehr Mohammadi who remains in detention.

Sincerely,
Carla Stuart
Scholars at Risk Network
carla.stuart@nyu.edu
1-212-998-2179 (tel)

Scholars at Risk calls for investigation into the death of a detained Iranian student

Date: August 2, 2006

Scholars at Risk is extremely concerned about the recent death in detention of Akbar Mohammadi, a former university student at Tehran University, and the medical condition and circumstances of the continued detention of his brother Manuchehr Mohammadi, a former student leader. Scholars at Risk calls for letters, faxes and emails calling for an immediate investigation into the death of Akbar Mohammadi and information about the medical condition of Manuchehr Mohammadi, as well as assurances that he will be allowed access to legal counsel and family members while in detention.

Scholars at Risk is an international network of universities and colleges working to promote academic freedom and to defend the human rights of scholars and students worldwide. SAR recently learned that Akbar Mohammadi passed away while in detention at Evin Prison on July 30, 2006. He was in prison since 1999, serving a 15 year sentence, reduced from an initial death sentence for unclear offenses; although he had been granted several leaves from prison for medical treatment. He was originally arrested with a group of other student activists after demonstrations in July 1999 protesting the closing of a daily newspaper. Most recently, he was re-arrested in June 2006 and had been on hunger strike in protest of this arrest for a number of days before his death. He was reportedly denied access to legal counsel during this time, despite repeated requests for consultation from his lawyer. There have also been numerous reports of the torture and ill treatment in detention of Akbar Mohammadi from Amnesty International, increasing SAR's concern about the circumstances of his death.

SAR learned further that Manuchehr Mohammadi, who was also arrested in July 1999, reportedly remains in detention in Tehran's Evin Prison. He allegedly lapsed into a coma in July 2005 after conducting a hunger strike in protest of authorities' refusal to grant him medical leave to receive treatment for acute gum disease. He was subsequently granted medical leave, but reports indicate that he is currently in detention and his medical

condition is unknown. According to Amnesty International, he was originally sentenced to 13 years imprisonment for charges related to national security. His sentence was later reduced to seven years, but was extended in November 2003 by two years, allegedly because of interviews he had with foreign media while on leave and because of statements he made while in prison. Amnesty International has also detailed his allegations of torture and mistreatment while in detention. We have no further information about his medical condition and are concerned that he may not have access to legal counsel or to his family members.

SAR understands that the Iranian authorities have received autopsy reports regarding the cause of Akbar Mohammadi's death but do not plan to announce their findings for a month, according to the Iranian Labour News Agency (ILNA). Amnesty International had issued several appeals detailing allegations of ill treatment of both Akbar and Manuchehr, and has called for an independent investigation into the circumstances of Akbar Mohammadi's death. Scholars at Risk requests that urgent letters of appeal, emails and faxes be sent:

- respectfully calling on authorities to immediately investigate the circumstances of the death in detention of Akbar Mohammadi and to make the results and procedures of the investigation public as soon as possible;
- respectfully seeking assurances of Manuchehr Mohammadi's physical well being while he is in custody;
- respectfully seeking assurances that Manuchehr Mohammadi will be granted access to legal counsel and to his family members while in detention in accordance with Iranian and international law; and
- respectfully reminding the Iranian authorities that the free exchange of ideas across national boundaries is a core value of academic freedom and higher education generally.

WRITE TO:

His Excellency Ayatollah Sayed 'Ali Khomeini

Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic
The Office of the Supreme Leader
Shoahada Street
Qom, Islamic Republic of Iran

COPIES TO:

His Excellency Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi
Ministry of Justice, Park-e Shahr,
Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran

Ambassador M. Javad Zarif
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
Fax: (212) 867-7086

The Honorable Condoleeza Rice
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20520

Scholars at Risk
c/o New York University
194 Mercer St. Rm 410
New York, NY USA
Tel: 212-998-2179
Fax 212-995-4402
scholarsatrisk "AT" nyu.edu

Network for Education and Academic Rights
90 London Road
SE1 9LN, London, UK
Fax: 0044(0) 207 021 0881
contact "AT" nearinternational.org