

14 February 2018**Iran: Academic Ahmadreza Djalali facing death penalty
HRK President renews protest**

Iran's highest court has declined to review the death sentence issued against the academic Dr Ahmadreza Djalali, who has now been imprisoned for almost two years. The President of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) responded with a renewed call for the immediate reversal of the death sentence and the unconditional release of the academic.

In an open letter to the Iranian head of state, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the HRK President also appealed for Dr Djalali to receive immediate access to proper medical treatment. The academic's health has evidently deteriorated significantly during his imprisonment. Hippler urged Iran to respect human rights, protect academic freedom and recognise the principles of the rule of law.

"There is no doubt that academic relations with Iran offer great potential. However, the guarantee of academic freedom and protection of human rights are fundamental prerequisites for cooperation," Hippler said.

There have been sustained international protests against the arrest and sentencing of Dr Djalali. The HRK is supporting the [call by the international network Scholars at Risk](#) to send letters of support for Ahmadreza Djalali to the Iranian Government.

The HRK President has already made several appeals to the Iranian Government to release Ahmadreza Djalali. Djalali lives and works in Sweden, where he is employed at the Karolinska Institute. His arrest in Tehran occurred in April 2016 while he was attending a conference.