

26 November 2020**Great concern for Dr Ahmadreza Djalali regarding his impending execution in Iran
HRK President demands the researcher's release**

Both Amnesty International and Scholars at Risk currently report that the Swedish-Iranian academic Dr Ahmadreza Djalali, who has been under arrest in Iran since April 2016, is facing imminent execution. In light of this development, the President of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK), Professor Dr Peter-André Alt, has reiterated his call to quash the death sentence against Dr Djalali and to release him from custody without delay.

"The recent news of the actions of the Iranian authorities is extremely disturbing. All reports agree that Dr Djalali has been transferred to another prison over the past few days and has been placed in solitary confinement. Human rights organisations consider these measures to be an indication that implementation of the death penalty is imminent. I have joined the wide international protest and appealed once again in an open letter to the Iranian leadership not to implement the death penalty and to release Dr Djalali from custody.

International scientific cooperation is based on the standards of academic freedom and human rights. Iran is jeopardising the long tradition of German-Iranian university cooperation and is about to turn its back on the international academic community.

We will not stop fighting for Dr Djalali. I absolutely cannot imagine that the execution of a highly respected scientist and EU citizen will not have any repercussions for academic relations between Germany and Iran."

The HRK is emphatically supporting the urgent call by Scholars at Risk, the international network for the protection of at-risk researchers, to send letters of support for Ahmadreza Djalali to the Iranian Government.

Dr Djalali has been in Iranian custody since April 2016. In October 2017, the researcher, who lives in Sweden, was sentenced to death for "corruption on Earth" (ifsad fil-arz). Iran's Supreme Court denied a request to review the verdict in February 2018. For some time now, Dr Djalali has been refused proper medical treatment despite it being strongly suspected that he may have leukaemia. Scholars at Risk has accused the Iranian security forces of torturing the researcher. Amnesty International has also reported attempts to force him to confess.

The HRK has already made several appeals to the Iranian Government to release Ahmadreza Djalali.

According to the HRK database <https://www.internationale-hochschulkooperationen.de/en/foreign-countries.html> of international university partnerships, German universities are currently involved in 79 cooperations with Iranian partners.

You can find the open letter of HRK President Alt to the Iranian head of state, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, [here](#).