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## IRAN

### JAILED ACADEMIC NEEDS URGENT MEDICAL CARE

Iranian-Swedish medical doctor and academic Ahmadreza Djalali, imprisoned in Tehran's Evin prison, is being denied the urgent specialized medical care he needs. The Iranian authorities previously made his transfer to a hospital outside of prison conditional on being shackled which would amount to degrading treatment. He was sentenced to death after a grossly unfair trial which used "confessions" that Ahmadreza Djalali has said were obtained under torture.

In the last year, three different blood tests indicated that Ahmadreza Djalali has a low white blood cell count. A doctor who examined him in prison in early 2019 said that he must be seen by doctors specialized in haematology and oncology in a hospital outside of prison. To date, the authorities have not taken Ahmadreza Djalali to hospital for the medical care he requires. Since his arrest on 26 April 2016, he has lost 24 kg and now weighs 51 kg.



Ahmadreza Djalali with his family © Private

On two occasions, most recently in February 2019, Ahmadreza Djalali was scheduled to be transferred to a hospital outside of prison to see a specialist. But, on the day of the transfer, he was told that the transfer was conditioned on him being shackled and wearing a prison uniform. He protested against these degrading

conditions and, in reprisal, the authorities cancelled the transfer. Amnesty International considers that the conditions imposed on Ahmadreza Djalali's transfer to the hospital were unnecessary and excessive, and deliberately designed to humiliate and punish him. This treatment violates the absolute prohibition on cruel, inhuman or degrading treatments under international law; Iranian authorities have an obligation to treat prisoners respectfully in accordance with their inherent dignity as human beings.

In November 2018, Ahmadreza Djalali underwent hernia surgery in a hospital outside prison, after being in severe pain. After surgery, his legs were unnecessarily shackled to the hospital bed, which caused him emotional distress as well as physical discomfort. The authorities transferred him back to prison less than two days later, despite medical advice that he should remain hospitalized for longer. In February 2019, a prison doctor told him that he required a follow-up procedure to treat his hernia, but this has not taken place yet.

**Please send a letter to the Prosecutor General.**

- \* Using your own words, draw his attention to the denial of urgent medical care for medical doctor and academic Ahmadreza Djalali, in Evin Prison.
- \* Urge the Prosecutor General to immediately grant Ahmadreza Djalali the specialized care he needs outside prison and to stop using the denial of timely and adequate medical care as a form of additional punishment.
- \* Call on him to release Ahmadreza Djalali immediately and accord him an enforceable right to compensation, as per the recommendation of the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention in his case.

**Write to**

Prosecutor General of Tehran Ali Alghasi Mehr  
Office of the Prosecutor  
Corner (Nabsh-e) of 15 Khordad Square  
Tehran, Iran  
Salutation: Dear Mr Ali Alghasi Mehr

Please send a duplicate to him at this address as well:

Prosecutor General of Tehran Ali Alghasi Mehr  
C/o Permanent Mission of Iran to the UN  
Chemin du Petit-Saconnex 28  
1209 Geneva, Switzerland  
Salutation: Dear Mr Ali Alghasi Mehr

**Additional information**

Ahmadreza Djalali, an Iranian-Swedish academic living in Sweden, was on a business trip to Iran when he was arrested on 26 April 2016. He was held in Evin prison by ministry of intelligence officials for seven months. He was held for three months in solitary confinement, without access to a lawyer. Ahmadreza Djalali said that, during this period, he was subjected to torture and other ill-treatment to “confess” to being a spy. These included threats to execute him, his children, who live in Sweden, and his elderly mother, who lives in Iran. He has said that he was forced to make “confessions” in front of a video camera by reading out statements pre-written by his interrogators. Ahmadreza Djalali denies the accusations against him and says they have been fabricated by the authorities.

Ahmadreza Djalali was sentenced to death for “corruption on earth” (efsad-e fel-azr) in October 2017 after a grossly unfair trial before Branch 15 of the Revolutionary Court in Tehran. Amnesty International has consistently held that the offence of “corruption on earth” fails to meet requirements for clarity and precision needed in criminal law, and breaches the principle of legality and legal certainty. In a letter written from inside Evin prison in August 2017, Ahmadreza Djalali said he was held solely in reprisal for his refusal to use his academic ties in European institutions to spy for Iran. On 9 December 2018, his lawyers learned that Branch 1 of the Supreme Court had upheld his

death sentence in a summary manner without granting them an opportunity to file their defence submissions on behalf of Ahmadreza Djalali. On 17 December, an Iranian state-run TV station aired Ahmadreza Djalali's "confession" during a program titled *Axing the root*, which used dramatic music, graphics and international news footage interspersed with Ahmadreza Djalali's "confession", along with a voiceover presenting him as a "spy". By extracting and airing these forced "confessions", Iranian authorities have violated Ahmadreza Djalali's right to the presumption of innocence as well as the right not to be forced into incriminating himself. Ahmadreza Djalali has since said the "confession" aired was the one filmed while he was held in solitary confinement without access to a lawyer. Since December 2017, his lawyer has filed at least two requests for a judicial review of Ahmadreza Djalali's case. The first was rejected and a decision on the second, filed in January 2019, remains pending.

In November 2017, the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention called on Iran to release Ahmadreza Djalali immediately and accord him an enforceable right to compensation and other reparations, as he had been detained without an arrest warrant, had only been formally charged 10 months after his arrest, and had been "effectively prevented from exercising his right to challenge the lawfulness of his detention". They also found that his right to a fair trial had been violated to such a gravity "as to give Mr Djalali's deprivation of liberty an arbitrary character".

The refusal of authorities to provide prisoners with medical care constitutes torture if such deprivation is intentional and inflicts "severe pain or suffering" for such purposes as punishment, coercion or intimidation, obtaining a "confession", or for any reason based on discrimination of any kind. For more information, see Amnesty International's report: [Health care taken hostage: Cruel denial of medical care in Iran's prisons](#), 18 July 2016.