



International Science Council

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Office of the Supreme Leader
H.E. Grand Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Hosseini Khamenei
Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran
Islamic Republic Street – End of Shahid
Keshvar Doust Street, Tehran
Islamic Republic of Iran

17 October 2018

Your Excellency,

I write to you as President of the International Science Council in relation to our concerns about the imprisonment and deteriorating health of Mr Xiyue Wang. Mr Wang is a doctoral candidate at Princeton University, who was arrested in August 2016 while conducting research in Iran. Mr. Wang was subsequently sentenced to 10 years imprisonment on charges of infiltration, despite having the necessary permits and valid visa to attain historic documents in public archives relating to governance during the Qajar dynasty.

The International Science Council promotes equitable access to data, information, and other resources for academic researchers. Mr Wang was visiting Iran in good faith as part of his academic studies. It is our understanding that Mr Wang was transparent about his purpose for visiting Iran and received the necessary permissions from the Iranian Authorities to access historic archived material.

The International Science Council opposes imprisonment of researchers based on their peaceful conduct of scholarly research. There is no evidence that Mr. Wang was present in the Islamic Republic of Iran for any reason other than to pursue his dissertation research. Furthermore, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention of the United Nations Human Rights Council states “*Mr. Wang was peacefully exercising his right to seek and receive information for academic purposes in the form of historical records held by a public body, and that this falls within the boundaries of freedom of expression*”. The Working Group on Arbitrary Detention concluded in a statement issued on 23 August 2018 that “*there was no legal basis for the arrest and detention of Mr Wang*”. The International Science Council endorses the United Nations’ appeal for the immediate release of Mr Wang.

Your Excellency, please consider this letter in the positive spirit with which I, and the International Science Council, intend it to be conveyed. I look forward to your response.

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**International
Science Council**

Yours sincerely,

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Prof. Daya Reddy
President, International Science Council

Copies: Chief Justice of Iran, H.E. Ayatollah Sadegh Larijani; President Dr. Hassan Rouhan

Principle of Freedom and Responsibility in Science

The free and responsible practice of science is fundamental to scientific advancement and human and environmental well-being. Such practice, in all its aspects, requires freedom of movement, association, expression and communication for scientists, as well as equitable access to data, information, and other resources for research. It requires responsibility at all levels to carry out and communicate scientific work with integrity, respect, fairness, trustworthiness, and transparency, recognising its benefits and possible harms.

In advocating the free and responsible practice of science, the Council promotes equitable opportunities for access to science and its benefits, and opposes discrimination based on such factors as ethnic origin, religion, citizenship, language, political or other opinion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, or age.