

## Statement on concerns for scientists in Iran

The mission of the International Science Council (ISC) is to act as the global voice for science. As part of that mission, the ISC defends the free and responsible practice of science, in accordance with the Council's [Principle of Freedom and Responsibility in Science](#), the [UNESCO Recommendation on Science and Scientific Researchers](#), and other [international human rights instruments](#).

At a time when scientific research is of paramount importance to human and environmental wellbeing, the ISC is gravely concerned for the safety and wellbeing of a number of scientists currently imprisoned in Iran. These include [French-Iranian anthropologist Fariba Adelkhah](#), Swedish-Iranian disaster medicine expert [Dr Ahmadreza Djalali](#), and members of the [Persian Wildlife Heritage Foundation \(PWHF\)](#).

The right to share in and to benefit from advances in science and technology is enshrined in the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#). The right to engage in scientific inquiry, pursue and communicate knowledge, and to associate freely in such activities are outlined in the [International Covenant of Economic, Cultural and Social Rights](#) (ICECSR) and detailed in the accompanying [General Comment on Article 15](#).

According to the ICECSR, the pursuit of scientific research requires freedom. Based on the UNESCO Recommendation on Science and Scientific Researchers, the ISC seeks to uphold four fundamental scientific freedoms:

- Freedom of movement
- Freedom of association
- Freedom of expression and communication
- Freedom of access to data and information

These rights go hand in hand with responsibilities: the responsible practice of science and the responsibility of scientists to contribute their knowledge in the public space. Both are essential to the ISC's vision of science as a global public good. The arbitrary detention of [Adelkhah](#), [Djalali](#) and members of the [PWHF](#) represents a flagrant disregard for the vital importance of free and responsible science. Their ongoing incarceration also breaches international standards of due process, fair trial, and humane treatment of prisoners.

These cases are situated in the wider context of [increasing threats](#) to scientific freedom and other human rights around the world. The ISC's Committee for Freedom and Responsibility in Science (CFRS) [continues to work](#) with ISC Members and partners to monitor and respond to these threats. CFRS monitors individual and generic cases of scientists whose freedoms and rights are restricted as a result of carrying out their research, and the Committee provides assistance in such cases where its intervention can raise awareness and provide relief.

On the occasion of Nowruz (New Year), CFRS invites the global scientific community to join their call for the immediate release of all scientists arbitrarily detained in Iran.

The ISC welcomes all efforts to uphold the Council's Principle of Freedom and Responsibility in Science and stands ready to work with Members and partners to advance the vision of science as a global public good.