

# Alliance of Science Organisations in Germany

## Press release

Alexander von Humboldt Foundation

German Research Foundation

Fraunhofer Society

German Rectors' Conference

Leibniz Association

German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina –  
National Academy of Sciences

German Academic Exchange Service

Helmholtz Association

Max Planck Society

German Council of Science and Humanities

**30 November 2020**

## **Academia demands unconditional release of Ahmadreza Djalali German-Iranian university cooperation jeopardised**

The Alliance of Science Organisations in Germany is unequivocally calling for the release of Swedish-Iranian academic Dr Ahmadreza Djalali, who faces imminent execution in Iranian custody. It is further demanding humane treatment with medical care, access to family members and legal representation for Dr Djalali with immediate effect.

By doing so, it is following Thursday's [open letter](#) published by the President of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) addressed to Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the Supreme Leader of Iran.

These academic organisations consider long-term consequences to German-Iranian academic relations to be unavoidable if Djalali were not to be reprieved. They believe that the international academic community cannot accept one of its members being detained without legal basis for years on end under the harshest conditions and being threatened with death.

The Alliance is concerned that these circumstances will have an impact on the cooperation arrangements between its member institutions and their Iranian partners. The Alliance is convinced that academic freedom and respect for human rights form the basis for successful partnerships built on trust.

Dr Djalali has already been under arrest in Iran for four and a half years. The researcher and expert in disaster medicine, who is resident in Sweden, was sentenced to death in October 2017 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.

Similarly, [Scholars at Risk](#), the international network for the protection of at-risk researchers, is expressing its support for Dr Ahmadreza Djalali. It has accused the Iranian security forces of torturing the researcher and has called for letters of support to be written to the Iranian government. [Amnesty International](#) has reported attempts to force a confession.

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