







Human Rights session

ICMP 2018 - Montreal

chaired by **Edward Witten**, presented by **Ian Jauslin**

Some figures

REPORTED ATTACKS ON HIGHER EDUCATION		
SEPTEMBER 1, 2016 - AUGUST 31, 2017		
	Killings, Violence, Disappearances	55
	Imprisonment	83
	Prosecution	45
	Loss of Position	32
	Travel Restrictions	21
	Other	21
Total		257

source: [Free to Think 2017](#)

Ayşe Erzan (Turkey)



- Theoretical physicist from Istanbul Technical University (retired).
- Field: Biological networks.
- Currently being tried in Turkey for “propagandizing for a terrorist organization”.

Turkey - Peace Petition

- July 2015: [PKK rebellion](#).
- January 10, 2016: As an act of protest *Academics For Peace* circulated a petition: [“We will not be a party to this crime”](#) (signed by [2212](#) academics).
- As of June 26, 2018, [256](#) of the signatories have had a court hearing. [16](#) of these have been condemned to one year and three months in prison (the sentences were deferred in all but two cases).

Serkan Gölge (Turkey)



- Research scientist at [NASA's Johnson Space Center](#) in Houston.
- Condemned to [7.5 years in prison](#).

Turkey - Purge

- July 15, 2016: [Attempted coup d'état](#).
- Blamed on the followers of [Fethullah Güllen](#).
- The Turkish government has dismissed [over 100 000](#) people, and arrested [over 50 000](#).



Turkey - Purge

- The arrests often seem arbitrary
 - ▶ some were arrested for using a [secure messaging app](#),
 - ▶ the Altan brothers were arrested for [\[giving\] subliminal messages suggesting a military coup](#) on television,
 - ▶ Gölge, according to his wife, was [denounced as a Güllen supporter by a relative](#) with whom he was involved in an inheritance dispute.
- In many cases, dismissed scholars (and, more generally, people) [cannot find new work, and are barred from travel](#).

Ahmadreza Djalali (Iran)



- [Medical researcher](#), specializing in disaster medicine.
- A resident of Sweden, he was [arrested in April 2016](#) while organizing a workshop in Tehran.
- He is accused of [“corruption on Earth”](#) and spying, and was [sentenced to death](#) in October 2017.

Ahmadreza Djalali (Iran)

- He was held in [solitary confinement](#) for three months, and forced to sign confessions.
- In a letter written from his prison cell in August 2017, Djalali claimed that, in 2014, [the Iranian government had asked him to spy on their behalf](#) in the European institutions to which he was affiliated. He claimed that his arrest was a reprisal for his refusal.
- His [appeals were rejected](#), and he is currently awaiting his execution in Evin prison.

Santiago Guevara (Venezuela)



- [Economist](#) from the University of Carabobo.
- He studied the Venezuelan economy, and came to conclusions which were [critical of Chavez' economic policy](#).
- [Arrested on February 23, 2017](#) and [released on December 23, 2017](#).

Santiago Guevara (Venezuela)

- Raúl Baduel: ex-general who was close to Chavez. He fell out of favor in 2008 and was sentenced to 8 years in prison.
- Guevara was the thesis advisor for Baduel's son, and became close to the ex-general (who was, himself, critical of "Castrocomunism").
- On January 10, 2017, shortly before his release, Baduel was accused of fomenting a coup against Maduro and kept in prison.
- Guevara was arrested on February 23 for "treason".
- He was released on December 23, having lost 28 kg.

Omid Kokabee (Iran)



- [PhD student](#) at the University of Texas, specializing in laser physics.
- [Arrested in January 2011](#) while visiting his family in Iran, [sentenced on May 13, 2012 to 10 years](#) for “cooperation with a hostile government”.
- [Released on parole on August 29, 2016.](#)

Omid Kokabee (Iran)

- Kokabee explains, in a letter written from Evin prison, that he had been repeatedly [approached by Iranian government officials](#) to participate in military projects, including the Nuclear Project. He systematically refused.
- In prison, we was [offered his freedom in exchange for his participation in military projects](#). Again, he refused.
- He was [released on parole in 2016](#) after receiving treatment for a kidney cancer, contracted in prison.
- His parole [could be reversed at any time](#).

Scholar Rescue Fund



- Awards fellowships to at-risk Scholars. They are 1 to 2 years long. SRF provides up to \$25 000 a year, and requires a matching donation from the host institution.

Scholar Rescue Fund - history

- Run by the [Institute of International Education](#), founded in [1919](#).
- Its first success was to [lobby the US government](#) to create a non-immigrant student visa that would bypass the stringent quotas imposed in 1921.
- In 1933, it founded the [Emergency Committee in Aid of Displaced German Scholars](#), which brought [330](#) European scholars to the USA, among which [Felix Bloch](#), [Richard Courant](#), [James Franck](#), [Emmy Noether](#) and many others.
- The SRF was [founded in 2002](#).

Scholar Rescue Fund

- So far, 1194 awards have been granted to 761 scholars.
- 2007-2014: Iraq Scholar Rescue Project. Helped 280 scholars. 40% have returned to Iraq.
- Syria: 101 scholars since 2011.

CASE ID	M/F	DEGREE	FIELD	SEEKING PLACEMENT
Azerbaijan 007	M	Ph.D., Azerbaijan	Astronomy, Astrophysics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United States
Azerbaijan 008	M	Ph.D., USA	Political Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Europe • North America
Russia 020	M	Ph.D., Russia	Anthropology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North America
Syria 310	M	Ph.D., France	Plant Biotechnology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • France
Syria 315	M	Ph.D., Syria	Agricultural Sciences, Plant Breeding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canada • Europe • Middle East • Oceania
Turkey 011-R	F	Ph.D., Turkey	Anthropology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United States
Turkey 022-R	F	Ph.D., USA	Ethnomusicology, Armenian Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Europe • North America
Turkey 174	F	Ph.D., Turkey	Political Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Germany
Turkey 186	M	Ph.D., USA	Physics, Nanotechnology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canada
Turkey 195	F	Ph.D., USA	History of Science, Ottoman Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North America • Europe
Venezuela 010	M	Ph.D., Venezuela	Public Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United States
Yemen 044	M	Ph.D., Egypt	Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canada • Europe • Middle East • Oceania

Local initiatives

- UK: [Council for At-Risk Academics](#).
- Germany: [Philip Schwartz Initiative](#) of the [Alexander von Humboldt Foundation](#).

Further reading

- Scholar Rescue Fund: <http://scholarrescuefund.org>
- Council for At-Risk Academics: <https://cara.ngo>
- Schwartz: <https://www.humboldt-foundation.de>
- Scholars at Risk: <https://www.scholarsatrisk.org>
- Committee of Concerned Scientists: <http://concernedscientists.org>