

Prof. Dr. em. G. Röpke
Institute of Theoretical Physics
Rostock University
Universitätsplatz 3
18051 Rostock, Germany

His Excellency
Kamran Daneshjoo
Minister for Science, Research and Technology
Teheran

Islamic Republic of IRAN

Rostock, October 2011

Your Excellency,

We, the undersigned university professors, ascertain that the promotion of education up to university level must be regarded as among the most precious cultural assets of any nation, providing the groundwork for the development and well-being of its populace.

For this reason we are shocked to observe that higher education is being denied to young people of diverse groups in your country – one of the oldest cultural nations of mankind – in accordance with national policy. Those affected include a large number of Bahá'í youth, who over the last three decades have systematically been prevented by the authorities of your land from pursuing higher education. The informal institution “Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education” (BIHE), which was established by Bahá'is as a surrogate measure, has recently been declared illegal. A few days ago the Revolutionary Court in Teheran sentenced seven of the BIHE's teachers and organizers, who have already been incarcerated since May this year, to prison terms of variously four and five years – according to the hearing, as punishment for “activities hostile to the government.”

We demand the immediate release of these unjustly imprisoned individuals, and we insist upon the unrestricted observance of the right of higher education for all citizens of your country in accordance with international norms which your country has ratified and which recognize that “higher education shall be made equally accessible to all” (ICESCR, Article 13) and bar countries from “depriving any person or group of persons of access to education of any type or at any level” and from “limiting any person or group of persons to education of an inferior standard” (*Convention against Discrimination in Education*, UNESCO, Paris, 14 December 1960).

For us, the undersigned, the freedom of research and teaching and the universal recognition of human rights, also in the field of education, are of paramount importance. It is our conviction that these principles must also serve as a catalogue of values for the international cooperation among universities, which has for many years included close and cherished bonds between numerous universities in your country and partner institutions in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Signed by:

Prof. Dr. U. Backes
Prof. Dr. D. Bauer
Prof. Dr. A. Blätte
Prof. Dr. M. Dreyer
Prof. Dr. J. Engels

Hannah-Arendt-Institute of Totalitarianism Studies,
Technical University Dresden
Institute of Physics, Rostock University
Institute for Political Science, University of Duisburg-Essen
Department of Political Science, Jena University
Institute for Organic Chemistry and Chemical Biology,
Frankfurt University

| | |
|---|--|
| Prof. Dr. K.-P. Fritzsche | Department of Political Science, Magdeburg University |
| Prof. Dr. M. Göbel | Director, Institute for Organic Chemistry and Chemical Biology, Frankfurt University |
| Prof. Dr. R. Gröschner | Chair of Public Law and Philosophy of Law, Jena University |
| Prof. Dr. med. P. Hadji | University Clinic Giessen and Marburg GmbH, Marburg University |
| Prof. Dr. J. Ev. Hafner | Institute for Religious Studies, Potsdam University |
| Prof. Dr. A. Haratsch | Chair of German and European constitutional, administrative and international law, Hagen University |
| Prof. Dr. A. Hartmann | Director, Seminar for European Ethnology, Münster University |
| Prof. Dr. I. Hofmann | Helmholtz-Institute Jena, Institute of Applied Physics, Frankfurt University |
| Prof. Dr. em. E. Kankleit | Institute of Nuclear Physics, Technical University Darmstadt |
| Prof. Dr. em. J. Kiefer | Radiation Centre, Giessen University |
| Prof. Dr. M. Kilian | Chair for Public Law, Financial and Environmental Law, International and European Law, Halle University |
| Prof. Dr. mult. N. Knoepffler | Chair of Applied Ethics, Jena University |
| Prof. Dr. P. Kunzmann | Centre of Ethics, Jena University |
| Prof. Dr. em. K. Lüdicke | Institute for Canon Law, Münster University |
| Prof. Dr. S. Magen | Chair of Public Law, Philosophy of Law and Law Economics, Ruhr University Bochum |
| Prof. Dr. J. Maruhn | Institute of Theoretical Physics, Frankfurt University |
| Prof. Dr. E. Matthes | Chair of Pedagogy, Augsburg University |
| Prof. Dr. E. Meilhammer | Chair of Pedagogy, Augsburg University |
| Prof. Dr. U. Meixner | Institute of Philosophy, Augsburg University |
| Prof. Dr. J. Meyer-ter-Vehn | Max Planck Institute for Quantum Optics, Technical University Munich |
| Prof. Dr. em. R.-E. Mohrmann | Institute for Ethnology/European ethnology, Münster University |
| Prof. Dr. em. H. Moschtaghi | Catholic University for Applied Sciences, Freiburg |
| Prof. Dr. W.-U. Müller | Institute for Medical Radiobiology, University of Duisburg-Essen |
| Prof. Dr. P. Mulser | Institute of Applied Physics, Technical University Darmstadt |
| Prof. Dr. iur. J. Oebbecke | Chair for Public Law and Administration, Münster University |
| PD Dr. M. Perkams | Institute of Philosophy, Jena University |
| Prof. Dr. C. Pfeiffer | Director, Criminological Research Institute of Lower Saxony |
| Prof. Dr. A. Prengel | Institute of Primary School Pedagogy, Potsdam University |
| Prof. Dr. em. G. Röpke | Institute of Theoretical Physics, Rostock University, Member of the Saxon Academy of Science |
| Prof. Dr. M. Roth | Institute of Nuclear Physics, Technical University Darmstadt |
| Prof. Dr. S. Scharrer | Faculty of Social Sciences, Lutheran University of Applied Sciences in Nuremberg |
| Prof. Dr. H. Scheithauer | Department of Education and Psychology, Free University Berlin |
| Prof. Dr. theol. Dr. phil. T. Schirmmacher | President at the Martin Bucer Seminary, Director of the International Institute for Religious Freedom of the World-wide Evangelical Alliance |
| Prof. Dr. P.-P. Schnierer | Seminar for English Studies, Heidelberg University |
| Prof. Dr. em. F. Sobhani | Institute for Iranian Studies, Free University Berlin |

Prof. Dr. I. Spiecker called Döhmann

Institute for Information Law and Comparative Law,
Institute for Applied Law (ZAR), Karlsruhe Institute of
Technology (KIT)

Prof. Dr. U. Spuler-Stegemann

Institute for Oriental Studies, Marburg University

Prof. Dr. U. Steinbach

Lecturer, Centre for Middle-East Studies, Marburg
University

Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. em. C. Streffer

Essen University Clinic, University of Duisburg-Essen

Prof. Dr. C. Thies

Faculty of Philosophy, Passau University

Prof. Dr. med H. Towfigh

St. Barbara-Clinic Hamm, University of Duisburg-Essen

Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. E.-U. von Weizsäcker

Co-Chair, International Resource Panel, UNEP

Prof. Dr. H. Welzer

Director, Center for Interdisciplinary Memory Research,
Kulturwissenschaftliches Institut Essen, University of Wit-
ten/Herdecke

Prof. Dr. M. Winkler

Chair of general pedagogy and theory of social pedagogy,
Jena University