



Association for
**Iranian
Studies**

May 26th, 2020

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei
Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran

Ayatollah Ebrahim Raisi
Chief of the Judiciary

c/o H.E. Mr. Majid Takht-Ravanchi
Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations
622 Third Avenue, 34th Floor
NEW York, NY 10017, USA
Email: Iran@un.int
Fax: +1 (212) 867-7086

Your Excellencies,

As the president of the Association of Iranian Studies, I write to express concern regarding the imprisonment of our colleague, Dr. Fariba Adelkhah.

AIS is a private, non-profit academic society founded in 1967 to support and promote scholarship and research on Iran and the Persianate world at the international level. As an independent, non-partisan, non-political, multidisciplinary international community, the association publishes *Iranian Studies*, the principal journal in the field. AIS membership includes over 500 scholars, students, academic and other professional researchers. We are committed to encouraging the free exchange of ideas and academic freedom of speech, both within and beyond the geographical boundaries of Iran. The AIS Council's Committee on Academic Freedom has been following the particularities of this case, with increasing alarm, since its inception.

Dr. Adelkhah, a dual French and Iranian citizen and a long-term resident of France is a Senior Research Fellow at CERI-Sciences Po in Paris. She is of the most highly regarded anthropologists of Iran. After almost two years of field research in Iran, she was arrested and transferred to Evin prison in Tehran around June 5th, 2019.

Shortly after her arrest, the local news agencies reported that Dr. Adelkhah has been accused of conspiring against national security, although no charges were formally declared by the judiciary following the release of such reports. On May 16th, 2020, after almost a year of her imprisonment, Dr. Adelkhah was sentenced to 6 years imprisonment on national security charges and for "propaganda against the Islamic Republic." Dr. Adelkhah's lawyer, Mr. Said Dehghan, said that she would appeal the court's decision.

In considering her appeal, please note that Dr. Adelkhah has been a frequent traveler to Iran for her academic research. Her nuanced analysis of Iranian society and culture has made her an exemplary scholar in the field with an independent, dispassionate, non-partisan and scholarly perspective on modern Iran. None of her published books and articles has ever dealt with matters related to Iran's national security or defense. Indeed, her most recent project is on the translation of medieval French poetry into Persian. This confirms our view, and the view of many, that she is not, and never has been, a threat to anyone or any government.

As a community of scholars, we have the power to demand nothing. But, we will always cherish and celebrate the contributions of Dr. Adelkhah to our field. Nothing can erase her professional legacy to our colleagues and to our students. We ask, therefore, that you review the circumstances of her case with compassion, with mercy, and, most importantly, with respect for Dr. Adelkhah's profound contributions to the world's understanding of Iran.

We thank you for your timely attention to this important matter. We await news of our colleague and hope that she is soon returned to her life, to her loved ones, and, that she is able to rejoin us in academic fellowship.

Respectfully,



Camron Michael Amin
President, Association for Iranian Studies
Professor of History, University of Michigan-Dearborn