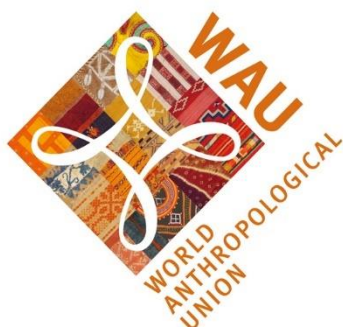


IUAES



March 3, 2020

His Excellency Ayatollah Ali Khamenei
Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran
c/o H.E. Dr. Majid Takht-Ravanchi
The Ambassador of Iran to the United Nations
622 Third Avenue, 34th Floor New York, NY 10017, USA
email: iran@un.int and contact@leader.ir



Your Excellency,

The World Anthropological Union (WAU) is highly concerned about the arrest of the French-Iranian anthropologist Fariba Adelkhah this past June. We wish to express our solidarity with our anthropological colleagues all across the world, and we want to affirm that the aim of anthropological research is to understand the human condition.

Fariba Adelkhah is a respected anthropologist and prolific author whose works have changed our understanding of Iranian society. Dr. Adelkhah arrived in France as a student in 1977, settled in France as a scholar yet, as all good ethnographers, has demonstrated her commitment to fieldwork by continuing to care about Iran.

Committed to the discipline, Dr. Adelkhah also expanded her field of research to include Afghanistan. This research was conducted as field research in a difficult locale as she was committed to the contribution that anthropology can make to our understanding of the world. After 2013, she returned to Iran to devote herself to the analysis of the Shiite clerical institution and the ties among Iran, Afghanistan, and Iraq. She used this research to expand upon her book *The Thousand and One Borders of Iran*.

Though living and working in France, Dr. Adelkhah has been a relentless advocate for Islam, highlighting how it is a truly egalitarian faith giving men and women equal status. She has also contributed to the understanding of women's position and role in contemporary Iran, and has sought to communicate to the world the positive aspects of both Islam and Iranian society noting how Iranian women have had "agency" and have thus contributed to the building of the Iranian state.

In addition to her academic endeavours, Dr. Adelkhah published under a nom de plume translating into Farsi French mystical poems from the end of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. She was committed to ensuring a two-way dissemination of information to ensure the enrichment of both cultures in which she has participated, notably French and Iranian cultures.

Given her decades-long illustrious research career, the WAU is certainly concerned about Dr. Adelkhah's arrest. We are sure that she has no links with foreign intelligence agencies and she was not engaged in any political activities in Iran or elsewhere. She is a distinguished scholar conducting research for the betterment of our discipline and humanity. The WAU upholds the tenets of academic freedom and the need to respect scholars pursuing academic research.



For all the reasons discussed above, the WAU asks for Iran to reconsider Dr. Fariba Adelkhah's imprisonment. Her release would be a clear statement that Iran is committed to ensuring that the rights of scholars and academics are fully respected in the republic. Dr. Adelkhah has demonstrated her commitment to Iran and to ensuring that the country and its dominant faith are viewed respectfully, and she requests that Iranian officials reconsider her imprisonment. Freeing Fariba Adelkhah would support the image of Iran as a just and magnanimous state.

As a global organization of anthropologists and social scientists representing diverse countries and cultures across the world, we respect the diversity and sovereignty of all peoples and states. We are thus making an appeal to your humanity and hoping that good judgment will prevail.

Respectfully,

Junji Koizumi, Ph.D.
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