



May 22, 2006

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei
Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran
c/o H.E. Javad Zarif
Ambassador Extraordinary
Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations
FAX: 212-867-7086

Your Excellency:

I am writing on behalf of the 1.3 million members of the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO, to express our concern about your government's arrest and detention of Professor Ramin Jahanbegloo, chair of the Department of Contemporary Studies at Tehran's Cultural Research Bureau. The AFT represents more college and university faculty than any other union in the United States.

We have been informed that Dr. Jahanbegloo, a prominent Iranian intellectual and political theorist, was arrested at Mehrabad airport in late April as he was preparing to leave Iran. Press reports indicate that Dr. Jahanbegloo is currently undergoing "interrogations" and that he is suspected of crimes related to "security and spying." Yet, as of today, no official charges have been filed.

Dr. Jahanbegloo has taught at several major universities in Europe and North America, including the Sorbonne, Harvard University, and the University of Toronto. He has authored more than 20 books. We are very concerned that Dr. Jahanbegloo has been detained because of views he has expressed in his scholarly works and in his role as a leading academic voice on issues relating to Iran in the international community.

Article 23 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran as well as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which the Islamic Republic of Iran is a party; protect the rights of individuals to freedom of thought, opinion, and speech. The arrest and on-going detention of Dr. Jahanbegloo appear to violate the principles expressed in those documents.

We urge you to consider the impact this arbitrary arrest can have on the reputation of your country in the world and release Dr. Jahanbegloo immediately.

Sincerely,

Edward J. McElroy
President

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American Federation
of Teachers, AFL-CIO

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