
OPEN LETTER

PROTECTING TRANSLATORS
AND INTERPRETERS WORLDWIDE



March 2017

H.E. Ayatollah Sayyid Ali Khamenei
The Office of the Supreme Leader
Shoahada Street
Qom
Islamic Republic of Iran

No Death for Content – Free Translator Marjan Davari!

Your Excellency,

The undersigned representatives of the world's language community were deeply saddened and greatly concerned to learn that translator and scholar Marjan Davari has been sentenced to death.

According to our information, on March 12, 2017, Branch 15 of the Revolutionary Court in Iran imposed the death penalty on Ms. Davari. She was convicted for spreading corruption on earth and conspiring against the state by, inter alia, translating metaphysical and mystical books.

By imposing the death penalty, Iran effectively criminalizes the act of translating texts on alternative belief systems and making such material available to a wider audience. Yet this decision clearly violates the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), ratified by Iran in 1975. We refer specifically to Article 19 of this Covenant, which states: "Everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice."

We urge your Excellency to have the judiciary honor the rights enshrined in the ICCPR by setting aside Ms. Davari's death sentence and releasing her without delay.

Sincerely,

Maya Hess, President, Red T

Linda Fitchett, Chair, AIIC Conflict Zone Group

Henry Liu, President, International Federation of Translators and Interpreters (FIT)

Aurora Humarán, President, International Association of Professional Translators and Interpreters (IAPTI)

Angela Sasso, President, Critical Link International (CLI)

Debra Russell, President, World Association of Sign Language Interpreters (WASLI)

Maurizio Viezzi, President, Conférence Internationale Permanente d'Instituts Universitaires de Traducteurs et Interprètes (CIUTI)

Liese Katschinka, President, European Legal Interpreters and Translators Association (EULITA)

Pascal Rillof, President, European Network for Public Service Interpreting and Translation (ENPSIT)

Mohamed ElGohary, Manager, Global Voices Lingua

Esther M. Navarro-Hall, Chair, National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT, USA)

Cc:

H.E. Hassan Rouhani, President

H.E. Ayatollah Sadeq Larijani, Head of the Judiciary