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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by the Verein Sudwind Entwicklungspolitik, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[5 June 2012]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

The situation of higher education in the Islamic Republic of Iran

Higher education is a prerequisite to achieve better living standards. Every year, more than 1 Million of Iranian high school graduates compete in an entrance exam for the Iranian national public universities, which if they are successful, will give them a vital criterion for future job opportunities.

According to the Iranian Constitution, "The government must provide all citizens with free education up to secondary school, and must expand free higher education to the extent required by the country for attaining self-sufficiency." Additional, such provisions are also required due to the Islamic Republic's commitment to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) and the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education.

However, students face serious barriers while studying at the universities. Hundreds had been deprived to continue their education or even enroll at the university due to political activities, union activities or even criticizing universities' administration. In some cases, students from religious minorities had been deprived higher education without any specific explanation.

Arbitrary arrests and detention of students, which existed before, had accelerated after the June 2009 disputed presidential elections over the past three years educational apartheid has specifically gained speed with hundreds of students being banned from pursuing their education. The leaders of the student movements had been arrested and sentenced to do a long time in prison. They were banned through rulings issued by the Disciplinary Committees on campuses and the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology. Disciplinary Committees pursue the illegal trend of marking political active students with stars in the process of their graduate school entrance examinations.

The recent¹ unacceptable statement of Mr. Kamran Daneshjoo, the Minister of Science, Research and Technology demonstrates the authorities' attitudes to university students and faculties: "The University is a place of support for the regime and the government. The activists of the sedition movement (meaning the protest movement against the disputed 2009 election) and those leaders and those who insist on their wrong views have no right to admission in universities".

Consistent, systematic, and planned educational apartheid in Iran

1. Between 2006 and 2011, Disciplinary Committees in the universities, had temporarily banned hundreds of university students from their right to education, in some cases leading to the students' expulsions.
2. The distribution of banned students across national universities after June 2009 known by us:

¹ Speech of 10.4.2012.

<i>Name of the University</i>	<i>Number of deprived students only after June 2009</i>
Amirkabir University of Technology (Tehran Polytechnic)	40
Allameh Tabataba'i University	More than 10
Ferdowsi University of Mashhad	30
University of Mazandaran and Babol Noushervani University of Technology	20
Imam Khomeini International University, Qazvin branch	13
Iran University of Science and Technology	20
Shiraz University	15
Shahrekord University	10
Islamic Azad-University, Shahrekord	2
Urmia University	4
Mazandaran University of Science and Technology (Babol)	5
Islamic Azad-University central Tehran	5
University of Kurdistan	7
Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz	8
Yasouj University	8
University of Tabriz	9
Khoramshahr Marine Science and Technology University	3
Shahrood University of Technology	10
Isfahan University of Technology and University of Isfahan	10
Islamic Azad University-Mashhad Branch	15

There are still dozens more concerned students in other universities nationwide.

Many of these students have faced illegal arrests and imprisonments simultaneously with a ban on education. For example only at the University of Mazandaran, 13 banned students were also detained and imprisoned.

3. During the same period, each year dozens of student activists with distinguished rankings in Iran's Graduate Entrance Examination have been banned from enrolling in the universities and pursuing their graduate studies. In 2006, student activists who had passed the Graduate Entrance Examination and whose names had appeared in the list of admission at the Sanjesh Organization's newspaper², faced stars next to their names on their enrollment forms, when they appeared to enroll in their universities of choice. Students who had three stars next to their names were never allowed to continue their education. In the years 2007 and 2008, as Graduate Entrance Examination results started to appear on the internet, student activists who had scored passing and distinguished rankings were not given their score sheets and thus were unable to choose their field of study. In 2009, when preliminary results for the Graduate Entrance Examination were announced prior to the presidential elections, "starred" students were able to receive their score reports and choose their field of study. But in September, they were informed that they had "failed

² A Sub-Organization of the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology responsible for admission of students in public universities in Iran, <http://sanjesh.org/>.

academically". None of them were issued a final score report and Sanjesh Organization announced that these students had failed to choose their field of study. After the students appeared in person, Sanjesh Organization verbally informed them that they had been "starred". These starred students were again banned from receiving their preliminary score report in the 2010 and 2011 Graduate Entrance Examination.

Unfortunately, recent reports, indicates that this trend has continued also this year as well and some students couldn't get their preliminary score report.

4. In addition to these cases, many Iranian students are banned from education only for their religious beliefs. For years Baha'i students had been banned from any educational rights. This year, some of Baha'i banned students and also instructors of Baha'i's online university (The Bahá'í Institute for Higher Education, BIHE) were arrested and sentenced to imprisonment and Baha'i's online university has been closed by the government.

According to the regulations any forms of disobedient of students from universities' law should be resolved by the disciplinary committee in the campus. Many such cases had ended in detention and harassment by security forces, or illegal charges via revolutionary courts.

Hereby are some examples:

- Bahareh Hedayat; member of "students' Islamic unions' association" was sentenced to 10 years in jail because of her university's activities. According to the internal laws of the university, the maximum penalty for a student by the disciplinary committee of the universities is a 4 months ban from education.
- Zia Nabavi; was banned illegally from higher education for his activities during bachelor degree, although he was accepted in the Graduate Entrance Examination. He is currently serving a 10 years sentence which was given to him after joining the education right's defenders committee.
- Majid Dorri; member of education right's defenders committee, was arrested and sentenced to 6 years in prison.
- Majid Tavakoli; student at Amir Kabir University was arrested after making a speech at a rally at the national students' day in December 2009. The university's education department has banned him from continuing his education. In prison, Majid applied for a course at an online university. For that matter the court sentenced him to lifetime ban from education.

At present, more than 30 students are imprisoned because of claiming their right to education or union activities including:

Saeid Jalalifar, Ieghan Shahidi, Ali-Akbar Mohammadzadeh, Hossein Ronaghi Malaki, Kave Rezaee, Ali Malihi, Hassan Asadi Zeidabadi, Hamed Omid, Mehdi Khodaie, Milad Karimi, Babak Dashab, Hamed Rouhi Nejad, Shahin Zeinali, Arash Sadeghi, Javad Alikhani, Omid Kokabi, Habibollah Latifi, Shabnam Madadzadeh, Atefeh Nabavi (freed at 31 May 2012 after serving 3 years of jail), Fereshteh Shirazi, Afshin Shahbazi, Rouzbeh Saadati, Mehrdad Karami, Ali Jamali, Mohammad Ahadi.

Discrimination because of belief is not only limited to students, but also expands to professors as well. During the past seven years, tens professors had been discharged directly from their positions or forced to resign due to academic analysis or critics of the policies of Ahmadinejad administration - which is a gross violation of freedom of expression and opinion in the academies. Some recent cases are listed below:

<i>No</i>	<i>Name</i>	<i>University</i>	<i>Department</i>	<i>Date</i>
1	Prof. Ali Asghar Beheshti Shirazi	Science & Technology	Electronics	April 13, 2010
2	Prof. Mohamad Shahri	Science & Technology	Electronics	April 13, 2010
3	Prof. Tahmures Bashiriye	Tehran	Law	May 12, 2012
4	Prof. Mohsen Rahami	Tehran	Law	May 12, 2012
5	Prof. Dr. Vallah	Shahid Beheshti	Philosophy	April 28, 2012
6	Prof. Mohammad Saeed Hanaei Kashani	Shahid Beheshti	Philosophy	April 28, 2012
7	Prof. Seyed Ali Reza Hosseiny Beheshti	Tarbiyat Modares	Humanities	May 13, 2012
8	Prof. Ghorban Behzadiyan-Nejad	Tarbiyat Modares	Microbiology	May 13, 2012

We urge the Islamic Republic of Iran:

- to fulfill its international obligations, especially those related to the right of education and freedom of expression in the academies;
- to release immediately and unconditionally all prisoners of conscience including the student activists and university professors.

We request the Special Rapporteur on the right to Education to follow the cases of students deprived of their right to education and their rights to freedom as well as the forced resignation of faculty members.

We request the Special Rapporteur to visit the country after the Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Iran.