

SCHOLARS AT RISK NETWORK  
Hosted by NEW YORK UNIVERSITY




## Overview of the Scholars at Risk Network

at the European Humanities University  
Vilnius, Lithuania  
20 June 2008

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## What is the Scholars at Risk Network?

- SAR is an international network of scholars and institutions working to promote academic freedom and related higher education values.
- SAR works on three tracks:
  - Track 1: Direct Assistance** to threatened academics and institutions
    - Match-maker & partner
  - Track 2: Capacity building** and developing new tools for advocacy
    - Focusing on transparency and accountability
  - Track 3: Scholarship & education** promoting a "rights-based" H.E. sector.
- Faculty and institutions participate in different ways, based on local interests

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## Why three tracks?

- Each track grows from and reinforces SAR's primary mission:
  - To assist as many of the most threatened scholars as possible, wherever they are, whatever they do, in whatever ways we are able, working in partnership with whomever shares this goal.
- Track 1 primarily serves scholars outside of their home country.
- Track 2 adds services for scholars and universities in their country/region.
- Track 3 challenges scholars and universities everywhere to deepen their commitment to core higher education values in all that they do.

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## Guiding principles

- Transparency**
  - The network strives to be open and transparent, with input welcomed and without hidden commitments.
- Broad-based**
  - The network should include a range of institutions to help the greatest number of academics and to most widely promote academic freedom.
- Flexibility and respect for limits**
  - The network strives to remain flexible to accommodate varying capacities and levels of involvement, and to respect limits of members' time and financial resources.
- Clear commitments and local decision-making**
  - The network strives to provide clear commitments and each institution retains final decision-making authority over when and how to participate.

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## Track 1: Attacks on scholars & universities

<p><b>Against academics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>harassment           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>including surveillance, denial of accesses or permissions, confiscation of notes and computers files, professional or personal slander or defamation, physical or sexual intimidation</li> </ul> </li> <li>arbitrary dismissal</li> <li>exile (internal and external)</li> <li>arrest on false charges</li> <li>detention without trial</li> <li>trial and imprisonment</li> <li>torture</li> <li>disappearance</li> <li>extra-judicial killing (murder)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Against university:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ideological pressure and censorship           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>including imposition of approved national ideology, book burning and ideological revisionism</li> </ul> </li> <li>closing of schools and universities</li> <li>suppression of strikes/protests</li> <li>restrictions on travel</li> <li>restrictions on information exchange</li> <li>discriminatory restrictions on academic resources           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>including discrimination against women, indigenous peoples, and religious, cultural or ethnic groups</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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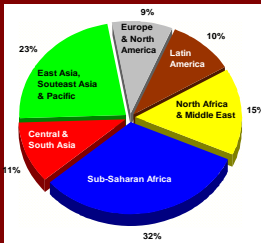
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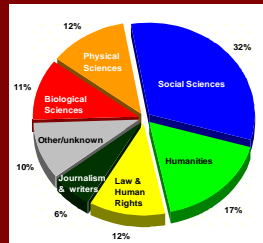
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Where do they come from?



What do they do?



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**Prof. SR • History • Madagascar**

Professor SR is a renowned historian who taught at a university in Madagascar. Following his participation in a movement advocating transparency in the 2001 election results, this professor and several colleagues were accused of instigating students to riot against the government. After these accusations were made, Prof. SR's colleagues were harassed and intimidated. One colleague disappeared. Prof. SR's fears were compounded by his belonging to an ethnic minority in an increasingly sectarian atmosphere. With the help of SAR, Prof. SR and his family were invited to spend a year at a university in the US. On successful completion of his fellowship, Prof. SR returned to Madagascar, where the political atmosphere had improved considerably, and was appointed vice-president of his previous university.

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**Mr JE • Political Science • Ivory Coast**

Dr. JE is a political scientist and professor of public policy and law from the Ivory Coast. In 2002, Dr. JE left his country to study in the US. On his return to Cote D'Ivoire in 2003, government forces were suspicious of his western education and accused him of collaborating with the opposition party and the US, causing him to fear for his life and flee his home country. His wife remained in Cote D'Ivoire and continued to receive threatening calls, which eventually forced her and her child to also flee. SAR nominated Dr. JE for a Scholar Rescue Fund fellowship, which he was granted. Dr. JE was appointed Assistant Professor of Conflict Resolution and Public Policy at a university in the US, where he and his family are now permanent residents. He has subsequently been granted tenure at the university.

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**Track 2: Capacity-building. Example: NEAR/SAR workshops**

	INDIVIDUAL	INSTITUTION
Professional Autonomy	Professional autonomy Professional associations International legal instruments International security	Professional autonomy International standards International security
Public Violence	Public violence SAR advocacy, IHR & UNESCO	NEAR events SAR advocacy, IHR & UNESCO
International Violations	Human rights violations Abuses International treaties	SAR advocacy SAR training
International Autonomy Violations I	International standards International standards (OHCHR, Treaty, Council) International standards International standards	NEAR events SAR publications International standards (OHCHR, Treaty, Council) SAR publications
International Autonomy Violations II	State Public institutions State Public institutions	State Public institutions

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**Example: Academic freedom survey**

**Challenge 1:** How do we defend academic freedom without knowing the extent of the threats?

**Challenge 1 restated:** How can we measure and compare levels of respect for academic freedom?

**Answer: World survey built around 4 positive goals:**

- Goal 1: Promote State Conditions for a Healthy H.Ed. Sector
- Goal 2: Strengthen Higher Education Institutions
- Goal 3: Support Higher Education Professionals
- Goal 4: Develop Education-Focused Partnerships with Students

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**Academic freedom survey: 4 goals/ 17 indicators**

**Goal 1: State Conditions**  
Indicator 1: Basic political and economic stability  
Indicator 2: Legal system respects higher education institutions and values  
Indicator 3: Adequate resources available to sustain higher ed communities

**Goal 2: H Ed Institutions**  
Indicator 4: Institutional Autonomy  
Indicator 5: Accountability of leadership  
Indicator 6: Fair and Transparent Procedures  
Indicator 7: Access to All

**Goal 3: Professionals &**  
Indicator 8 & 13: Security of Persons and Materials  
Indicator 9 & 14: University Gov't Respect Depart/Faculty/Student Privileges  
Indicator 10 & 15: Censorship and Dissent

**Goal 4: Students**  
Indicator 11 & 16: Access to Information, Equipment and Materials  
Indicator 12 & 17: Travel for Academic Purposes

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**4 goals/ 17 indicators/ 89 factors. Example: 8.1**

**Goal 3: Support Higher Education Professionals**

**Indicator 8: Security of Persons and Materials**

8.1 Academics are free from fear of violent reprisals, imprisonment, persecution or threats of violence directed at them, their families or colleagues because of their teaching, research or professional affiliations.

- (0) Public, widespread abuses of academics including violence, imprisonment or intimidation.
- (1) Significant public abuses of academics including violence, imprisonment or intimidation.
- (2) Some reported abuses of academics including violence, imprisonment or intimidation.
- (4) Academics generally free from fear of violent reprisals, loss of liberty or intimidation, with rare, isolated exceptions.
- (5) Academics generally free from fear of violence reprisals, loss of liberty or intimidation.
- N/A
- Blank

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### Survey complemented by online opinion polling

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### Survey + polling support world reporting

(Opinion poll respondents as of 4/1/07)

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### Survey + polling support country reporting

Appendix 2: Model Country Profile (first page only)

DATE CONDITIONS	HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS	PROFESSIONALS	STUDENTS	RISK/RATE
1/02	3/03	4/01	5/00	4.4

Composite score (prepared by SAR)

Indicator Average Scores (prepared by country specialist)

Country Narrative (by country specialist)

Argentina  
Background:  
Argentina gained independence on July 9, 1816. As it had in World War I, Argentina proclaimed neutrality at the outbreak of World War II. Use in the closing phase declined rise in the Axis power in March 1941. Juan D. Peron, an army colonel, emerged as the strongest of the postwar era, winning presidential elections in 1946 and 1951. Peron's political strength was reinforced by his second world war...

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### Comparative scales support dialogue & recommendations

Appendix 3: Model Table of Averages by Indicator (reflecting test data)

COUNTRY	PROFESSORS WITH CONCERNS FOR THEIR POLITICAL, EDUCATIONAL BELIEFS				A FURTHER GROUP OF EDUCATIONAL BELIEVERS				SUPPORTIVE HIGHER EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS				UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP AND SUPPORTIVE STUDENTS				Overall Average
	Basic Safety	Legal Climate	Political Freedom	Freedom of Academic Expression	Freedom of University of Faculty	University Governance	Academic Freedom	Faculty Salary	Faculty Status	Faculty Tenure	Faculty Salary	Faculty Status	Faculty Tenure	Faculty Salary	Faculty Status	Faculty Tenure	
Panel 1: China	4.4	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	
Panel 2: India	4.4	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	
Panel 3: Russia	4.4	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	
Panel 4: Ukraine	4.4	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	
Panel 5: Uzbekistan	4.4	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	

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### Track 3: "Rights-based" university/sector

- Human rights background to meaningful discussion of academic freedom
- "Rights-respecting" (minimum)
- "Rights-promoting"
- Responding to developed-world threats by strengthening commitment to core H.E. values

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### What does a member representative do?

- Communicate your institution's interests to the SAR office
- Share information about threatened academics and network activities with your institution's leadership and departments
- Consider establishing a university or regional SAR committee to deepen participation, and with that committee considering participation in various SAR activities, including:
  - hosting events to promote academic freedom
  - hosting scholars at your institution
  - helping SAR to organize national and regional SAR sections
  - helping SAR and NEAR to organize an AF workshops in your region
  - taking part in SAR research projects and network-wide committees
  - encouraging your students to intern with SAR and research AF

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## 5 practical ways you can help SAR

- **Campus advocate:** advocating for your university to become a member and to take part in SAR activities.
- **National network co-convenor:** co-convening a meeting for universities in your area to explore forming their own SAR network or SAR section.
- **Regional workshop co-host:** co-hosting a SAR/NEAR academic freedom workshop in your region.
- **National survey director:** serving as a research partner or national survey director for your country, supervising students and other researchers.
- **Friend of SAR:** by nominating scholars; sharing information and contacts; hosting scholars for visits; participating in research projects; and helping SAR find the resources needed to sustain activities, grow the network and support threatened scholars worldwide.

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# Thank you!

## Scholars at Risk Network

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