

## Scholars at Risk: 2019 Year in Review

2019 has been a momentous year for Scholars at Risk. Working together, we were able to offer safety and advisory services to a record number of scholars, expand monitoring capacity and advocacy efforts, create new tools and strategies for promoting higher education values, and strengthen our global network.

### Supporting At-Risk Scholars



Supporting threatened scholars remains at the core of our mission. SAR arranged 115 placements at 73 institutions and provided trainings and advisory services for 383 scholars. We administered 33 gap-filling emergency assistance grants to scholars. We also held 6 trainings this year with 177 participants for scholars and their university hosts, providing best practices on supporting scholar visits and sharing advice with scholars on finding their next opportunities, in exile or upon return.

### Monitoring Attacks and Advocating for Change

As attacks on higher education communities grow, SAR has increased its monitoring and advocacy efforts. In October, SAR released [Free to Think 2019](#), an annual report of SAR's Academic Freedom Monitoring Project, analyzing a record 324 attacks on scholars, students, and their institutions in 56 countries.

This September, SAR released [Obstacles to Excellence: China's Quest for World Class Universities](#), which provides a survey of major issues impacting academic freedom in China and where China has extraterritorial academic connections.



Led by faculty at our member institutions, SAR held 8 Legal Clinics and 14 Student Advocacy Seminars at 19 universities this year. Students supported SAR's Monitoring Project and UN advocacy efforts, helped SAR campaign on behalf of 50 imprisoned

scholars and students around the world, and generated more than 6,500 appeals, and in the US took to Capitol Hill for advocacy and skills training at SAR's third annual Student Advocacy Day.

## Promoting Higher Education Values



Alongside our [Academic Refuge project partners](#), SAR launched a free online course entitled *Dangerous Questions: Why Academic Freedom Matters*, which explores academic freedom and related core higher education values. The course drew more than 2,300 participants from 120+ countries, and is scheduled to run again on

the [FutureLearn](#) platform in Spring 2020.

## Launch of SAR Europe

SAR launched its European office— SAR Europe—in November 2018 in partnership with Maynooth University, Ireland. The establishment of SAR Europe represents the culmination of nearly two decades of partnership between European higher education institutions and the global SAR Network.



SAR Europe's mandate is to grow, support, and coordinate the activities of national SAR sections and partners across Europe, and to strengthen our collective voice in Europe for the greater protection of and advocacy for scholars, and for increased respect for academic freedom worldwide.

## Spotlight: Imprisoned Uyghur scholar awarded the 2019 Sakharov Prize



On December 18, Jewher Ilham accepted the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought from European Parliament on behalf of her father, Professor Ilham Tohti, who was arrested six years ago. The prize recognizes Professor Tohti's work to promote reconciliation and dialogue between the Han Chinese and Uyghurs through his site, "Uighurbiz.net." SAR was honored to accompany Ms. Ilham at European Parliament to accept the award on her father's behalf.

Join SAR and Ms. Ilham in calling for the immediate release of Professor Tohti!

## Scholar-in-Prison in South Sudan Released!

On January 2, Peter Biar Ajak, a PhD candidate at the University of Cambridge and prominent political activist, was pardoned and released from prison in South Sudan by presidential decree. Mr. Ajak was arrested on July 28, 2018, in apparent retaliation for his activism.



SAR is grateful to its partners and network, including participants in the Student Advocacy Seminars, who advocated for Mr. Ajak. You can get involved and learn how to advocate for wrongfully imprisoned scholars at the 2020 SAR Global Congress.

[Register Now»](#)

---

## Join the Network!

Scholars at Risk invites higher education institutions to join our network. Please reach out to [madeline.everett@nyu.edu](mailto:madeline.everett@nyu.edu) if your university is interested in a Scholars at Risk membership. Not sure if your university is already a member? Check out our Membership Directory of 500 higher education institutions that have pledged to protect academic freedom.

[Membership Directory »](#)

---

## Events



### **The 106th Annual Meeting of the Association of American Colleges & Universities | Jan. 22 | Washington, DC**

Scholars at Risk is proud to partner with the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) as a sponsor of their 106th Annual Meeting in Washington, DC and as a recipient of their sponsorship of the 2020 Global Congress.

[Read More »](#)

### 2020 Phillip Schwartz Forum | Mar. 9 | Berlin, Germany

The 2020 Philipp Schwartz Forum of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation provides an opportunity for threatened researchers, host institutions, funding organisations, and partners in Germany and abroad to discuss current issues and strategies related to the topic of threatened scholars.

[Read More »](#)

### SAR 2020 Global Congress | Mar. 25-28, 2020 | Washington, DC & Baltimore, MD

Save the date! Scholars at Risk invites you to the SAR Network 2020 Global Congress on March 25-28, 2020, convened in partnership with Johns Hopkins University and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS).

[Register Now »](#)


---

#### Connect with Us



Scholars at Risk is an independent not-for-profit corporation, hosted at New York University. Our international network of institutions and individuals shares a mission to protect threatened scholars, promote academic freedom, and prevent attacks on higher education communities around the world.

Scholars at Risk values your privacy and data security. You have received this email consistent with our [privacy policy](#) based on your prior consent.

Scholars at Risk  
411 Lafayette Street, 3rd Floor  
New York, NY 10003 USA

Tel: 212-998-2179  
scholarsatrisk@nyu.edu  
www.scholarsatrisk.org

**(UNSUBSCRIBING IS NOT SUPPORTED IN PREVIEWS)**

[MANAGE PREFERENCES](#)