

The SEP wholeheartedly supports this initiative from the DAVO (Deutsche Arbeitsgemeinschaft Vorderer Orient) and express our solidarity and sympathy with Iranian students and university members.

We, academics at German, Austrian, and Swiss universities and research institutions, strongly condemn the violent actions of state security forces against students and university staff in Iran.

We are convinced that violence has no place at universities. The Iranian state's violent response to the protests for freedom and women's rights in the country, which have been going on for more than two weeks, is now accompanied by a particularly brutal attack on the country's academic freedom. On the evening of October 02, 2022, for example, security forces violently attacked protesters at the Sharif University of Technology in Tehran. The university was surrounded and students and scientists were subject to shooting. Members of the university were marked with paintball bullets, then arrested and reportedly taken in part to Evin Prison, where political prisoners are held.

This is not only an attack on the physical integrity of students and scholars, but also on the freedom of research and teaching. As academics, we strongly condemn this attack, stand in solidarity with our threatened colleagues and students, and advocate for their protection. We therefore demand an end to the violence on the part of the security forces and call on our colleagues to stand up for the protection of their students.

The nationwide protests were triggered by the death of Zhina Mahsa Amini, who was taken into custody by the so-called morality police because of an allegedly loose hijab. The 22-year-old Kurdish woman from Saqez died on September 16, 2022, likely as a result of police violence.