

APR18-2018-001231

Abstract for an Invited Paper
for the APR18 Meeting of
the American Physical Society

The Role of the Physicist in Human Rights¹

SHELLY R. LESHNER, Univ of Wisconsin, LaCrosse

The Committee on the Intellectual Freedom of Scientists (CIFS) of the American Physical Society (APS) has been a proud defender of the human rights of scientists in the US and abroad since its formation in 1976. It is responsible for “monitoring concerns of problems encountered by scientist in pursuit of their scientific interest or in effecting satisfactory communication with other scientists.” This talk will focus on violations of these rights, particularly, in the 21st century. Some cases include: Omid Kokabee, an Iranian studying physics at the University of Texas-Austin who was in an Iranian prison for five years for refusing to engage in scientific research he deemed harmful to humanity; Wen Ho Lee, a Los Alamos researcher whose human rights were violated by the United States on accusations of spying for a foreign government; the current persecution of Turkish scientists and the inability of free travel of scientists between Israel and Palestine. Suggestions will also be made on how individuals can become involved in these issues.

¹This work is partially funded by NSF Grant No. PHY-1713817