

MAR12-2011-003629

Abstract for an Invited Paper
for the MAR12 Meeting of
the American Physical Society

Scientists and Human Rights

YOUSEF MAKDISI, Brookhaven National Laboratory

The American Physical Society has a long history of involvement in defense of human rights. The Committee on International Freedom of Scientists was formed in the mid seventies as a subcommittee within the Panel On Public Affairs “to deal with matters of an international nature that endangers the abilities of scientists to function as scientists” and by 1980 it was established as an independent committee. In this presentation I will describe some aspects of the early history and the impetus that led to such an advocacy, the methods employed then and how they evolved to the present CIFS responsibility “for monitoring concerns regarding human rights for scientists throughout the world”. I will also describe the current approach and some sample cases the committee has pursued recently, the interaction with other human rights organizations, and touch upon some venues through which the community can engage to help in this noble cause.