



Centre for **A**ppplied **R**esearch & **E**valuation
International **F**oundation

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Press Release

Careif calls for compassion, humility and mental health for the young Americans held in Iran

Three young Americans, Sarah Shourd, Josh Fattal and Shane Bauer were arrested on July 31, 2009 whilst hiking on the Iranian border and have been held at Evin Prison in Iran for more than 21 months in almost complete isolation. Sarah, Shane's fiancée, was released last September on humanitarian grounds and on the basis of Islamic compassion. Their plight has been well reported, Desmond Tutu along with many other notable individuals and governments have called for the release of the detainees. President Obama and other world leaders urge that these young people are teachers and volunteers.

We are faced with many new frontiers for understanding the role of psychological processes in the generation and prevention of mental distress; in the age of globalisation this and related cultural encounters present special challenges for specialists in culture and psychiatry. Taking the focus of population health, life-course approaches and well-being and resilience among young people as a new frontier of cultural psychiatry, Careif has provided a position statement for the attention of the Supreme leader of Iran, and the wider public.

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Background Notes for editors & press

The Centre For Applied Research and Evaluation-International Foundation. (careif)

Careif is a charity registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales (registered number 1121374) and a company limited by guarantee registered at Companies House (registered number: 06231733). Careif is an international charity based at the Barts & The London School of Medicine and Dentistry, Wolfson Institute of Preventive Medicine, London, England (QMUL). Careif has a number of relationships and interests in the UK, Asia, Middle- East, Europe, Africa, New Zealand, the Americas and the Caribbean.

We work to preserve and protect good mental health (www.careif.org)

The main aim of careif is to share knowledge about mental health in order to improve people's wellbeing. This includes how to live healthily and ensure that working practices and services are suited to different cultures and societies across the world. It delivers its work through four distinctive building blocks, which are

- High quality learning and teaching locally, nationally and internationally
- Research, evaluation and practice development into culture and wellbeing
- Provide international volunteering, exchange and twinning schemes
- Promote and develop positive practice on sports, young people and wellbeing of individuals and communities.

Careif gathers support from a number of like-minded people and organisations throughout the world. Organisations of culture and mind are represented at all levels within the charity by leaders in humanities, fairness, justice and reconciliation (see careif.org). Careif has worked closely with the World Association of Cultural Psychiatry and proposes a debate on the evidence for mental health problems as a result of detention; we will gather narratives or problems and solutions and debate these in London's Olympic Year 2012 at a world congress of cultural psychiatry 9-12th March 2012 (see wacp2012.org).

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