

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

ARTS & SCIENCE

ARTHUR L. CARTER JOURNALISM INSTITUTE

November 2, 2017

Dear President Hamilton,

We, the majority of senior members of the Carter Journalism Institute faculty at New York University, are writing to express our dismay at the United Arab Emirates government's decision to deny security clearances and work visas to one of our faculty members, Prof. Mohamad Bazzi, and to our colleague from the Department of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, Prof. Arang Keshavarzian, who is also a tenured faculty member at NYU. Prof. Bazzi was scheduled to teach at New York University Abu Dhabi this fall. We have not been given an explanation for the denial of these visas, but if it was for reasons of religious affiliation (Profs. Bazzi and Keshavarzian are of Shiite origin) or because of our colleagues' writing and research, it would represent a significant threat to academic freedom on that campus. This episode also threatens the best values that NYU aspires to in building a "Global Network University," in which students and faculty can teach, study and collaborate across campuses.

We have the utmost respect for our faculty colleagues and students at NYU Abu Dhabi, and the work they have done over the past decade in building a world-class liberal arts campus. But we also want to make clear that, since a member of our faculty has been prohibited from teaching at NYU Abu Dhabi, the Carter Journalism Institute is not prepared to continue its relationship with NYUAD. Our faculty, a number of whose members have made the trip to NYUAD or taught courses there, voted unanimously at its last meeting to suspend the Institute's participation in the academic program in Abu Dhabi until these issues are satisfactorily resolved.

It is our deep wish that you and your administration do everything in your power to convince the authorities in Abu Dhabi to grant Profs. Bazzi and Keshavarzian visas and correct this situation. We are impressed that you, as president of our university, have spoken out publicly against the Trump administration's pernicious immigration policies, especially as they affect our students and faculty. However, many members of our faculty have been disappointed that you have not spoken out publicly against these visa denials in Abu Dhabi, where the university has had many dealings with the government and where a senior government official sits on NYU's Board of Trustees. Denying two members of the university's faculty the ability to teach at NYUAD is harmful to our community and inimical to our values.

We very much hope this matter can be resolved and that Profs. Bazzi and Keshavarzian will soon be able to teach at NYU Abu Dhabi. Resolving this problem will make our university stronger. We look forward to working with you to achieve that.

Adam Penenberg
Brooke Kroeger
Carol Sternhell
Charles Seife
Dan Fagin
David Dent
Jason Samuels
Jay Rosen
Katie Roiphe

Marcia Rock
Meryl Gordon
Mitchell Stephens
Mohamad Bazzi
Robert Boynton
Suketu Mehta
Susie Linfield
Ted Conover