

Motion to support a representative union for a global university

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This union notes:

1. The motion passed by union council entitled 'Motion to support Right to Education'¹
2. That UCL promotes itself as 'a modern, outward-looking institution, committed to engaging with the major issues of our times... with a global reach and global vision,' and that 38% of UCL students come from outside the UK, attracted from nearly 140 countries around the globe.²
3. UCL has a number of both Israeli and Palestinian students, all of which are supposed to be represented by UCL union.³
4. UCLU's function is to 'ensure that the diversity of its Membership is recognised and that equal access is available to all Members of whatever origin or orientation.'⁴
5. That Richard Goldstone, who led a UN Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict, was recently published in the New York Times having said, 'The need for reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians has never been greater. So it is important to separate legitimate criticism of Israel from assaults that aim to isolate, demonize and delegitimize it.'⁵

This union believes:

1. That for the union to take sides in complex on-going international issues is beyond its remit
2. That to do so inevitably alienates certain student groups on campus, which goes against its core objectives and values
3. That the position of the union frames the debate on campus, stifling genuine debate
4. We believe that the on-going Israel-Palestine conflict is both complex and divisive, and instead of taking sides the union should facilitate genuine public discussion on campus
5. In order to truly represent its global membership, all motions on international issues should be decided at a members' meeting or referendum

This union resolves:

1. To encourage public discussions between students on international affairs, including the Israel-Palestine conflict beyond the boundaries of student society meetings
2. To act as impartial mediator in these discussions
3. To overturn the motion passed by union council on 15/11/11 entitled 'Motion to support Right to Education'

This union mandates:

1. The Democracy and Communications Officer, the Education and Campaigns Officer, and the Student Activities Officer to look into the possibilities of arranging a series of debates on issues of student interest in 2012. The report should be submitted to the activities forum to examine the feasibility.
2. The Democracy and Communications Officer to provide regular updates to clubs and societies on union policies passed in union council and members meetings.

¹ <http://uclu.org/student-union/union-council/2011-12/uc1102-15-november-2011.php>

² <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/about-ucl/about-ucl-home>

³ <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/ras/statistics/current>

⁴ *UCLU MEMORANDUM AND ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION*, p.2. Accessed at <http://uclu.org/student-union/downloads/mem-and-arts-sept-2011.pdf>

⁵ Richard Goldstone, *Israel and the Apartheid Slander* (New York Times: New York, October 31 2011). Accessed at http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/01/opinion/israel-and-the-apartheid-slander.html?_r=1