

SOAS UNION GENERAL MEETING
Thursday 29th of January 2015
SOAS JCR – 5PM

MOTIONS

1. **LAPSING MOTIONS!!** P.1
2. **Make Ed Emery honorary member of the SOAS SU** P.2
3. **Tackling Harassment at SOAS** P.2
4. **Stop oppressing students in the Egyptian universities** P.3
5. **Change "Students with Disabilities' Officer" to "Disabled Students and Carers' Officer"** P.3
6. **Revision of LGBTQ Officer schedule** P.3
7. **Procedural guidelines for the BDS Referendum at SOAS** P.4
8. **Formation of a Research Students' Association (RSA)** P.4
9. **Instate a Co-President Liberation Coordinator** P.5
10. **Creating a new part-time executive position: Officer of Sports** P.6
11. **Creating a new part-time executive position: Class officer** P.7
12. **Counter Terrorism and Security Bill: Students, not suspects** P.7
13. **SOAS Supports Sex Workers' Rights** P.8
14. **World Social Forum 2015** P.10
15. **Support Solar SOAS** P.11

1. LAPSING MOTIONS!!

Here are the **motions lapsing** this year.

The motions we will be revising at this January UGM have been voted in 2011/12.

1.1 Opposing austerity measures, privatisation and cuts

Resolves to support campaigns against austerity, support proposals for progressive taxation and closure of tax heavens, support strikes across the UK by public sector workers, including UCU and oppose cuts at SOAS.

1.2 Formally recognise the SOAS anthem written by Ali Khan

Resolves to renew the officiality of the SOAS anthem forever, because we are SOAS till we die.

1.3 Submitting Educational and Non-educational priorities to the School every year

Resolves to submit Educational priorities and Non-educational priorities to the School committees at the beginning of every academic year, drafted by the in-coming Sabbs and approved by Exec and at the first UGM of the year.

1.4 Oppose the criminalization of squatting

Resolves to support squatters action for secure homes and support current and future squatters campaigns

1.5 Sending SOAS delegates at NUS Conferences

Resolves to send two elected delegates from SOAS to NUS conferences and have the delegates to present the views of SOAS students as mandated by SU policy and the general will of the Soasian population

2. Make Ed Emery honorary member of the SOAS SU

Proposer: David Suber ds60

Secunder: Gerogie Robertson gr14

The Union notes:

1.1 That the ethnomusicologist, writer, printer translator and political activist Mr Ed Emery has been at SOAS since 2008, first doing a Masters degree and then a PhD (Arabic and Jewish poetry of Andalus 1100-1350).

1.2 That Ed Emery is a Greek-English hybrid born in 1946, who first studied at but never graduated from Cambridge (tore up his final exams papers as part of the 1969 anti-exams campaign) and subsequently became a revolutionary activist (participation in the 1969 'Hot Autumn' in Italy; translating Antonio Gramsci, Antonio Negri, Dario Fo and Franca Rame; working with Italian leftist organisations such as Lotta Continua and Potere Operaio; and subsequently as a factory-gate activist in the auto industry).

1.3 That Ed Emery has engaged in radical theatre work in London, has initiated a project to create a Free University, and is prodigiously active in developing musical activities across a wide field.

1.4 That Mr Ed Emery's contribution to SOAS has been highly conspicuous: founder of the famous SOAS Rebetiko Band; principal organiser of the SOAS Ceilidh Band; co-founder of the SOAS Guerrilla Choir; organiser of The Maqam Project @ SOAS; organiser of the Kurdish Songbook Project @ SOAS; organiser of the Arabic Music Sessions @ SOAS; organiser of the Love and Liberation concerts; presenter of Ed Emery's Revolutionary Radio Show (SOAS Radio); perennial organiser of SOAS Halloween Dances et al.; indefatigable singer and musician on the majority of SOAS picket lines, demonstrations and protests; principal organiser of the 'SOAS Goes to Calais initiative', and very importantly, principal organiser for the maintenance of the SOAS piano.

1.5 That alongside these musical initiatives, Ed Emery has also three Camel Conferences (inc. famous Camel Walkabout), two Donkey Conferences, one War Horses of the World conference and one Elephant Conference (upcoming), all at SOAS

1.6 That Ed Emery was thrown off his PhD (he says "for epistemological hooliganism"), a decision against which he is appealing. As a result he no longer has right of access to the SOAS building. Two formal requests for a renewed access card (addressed to Music Dept and to Faculty of Humanities) have been rejected.

This Union Believes:

2.1 That Ed Emery has been contributing to the construction of SOAS's culture and spirit of musical solidarity, creativity and activism from 2008 to today.

2.2 That the SOAS SU has only one living honorary member of the Union, and it could do with two.

2.3 That if SOAS were to lose Ed's vital and creative contribution as a result of obstruction by SOAS management, the Union would lose one of its most committed and vital members.

2.4 That the SOAS students union should recognise the merits of its most exuberant, passionate and loyal members and should defend them when in need

This Union Resolves:

3.1 To make Ed Emery honorary life member of the Union

3. Tackling Harassment at SOAS

Proposer: Tom King, 349872, Mollie Hanley, 539420, Ella Achola, 567101, Karmel Carey, 584498, Roisin Crowley, 563459, Hannah Slydel

Secunder: Georgie Robertson

This Union notes:

1.1) that the Union has been conducting research over the last year to gain an understanding of students' experiences of harassment at SOAS

1.2) 16% of students have experienced harassment at SOAS

1.3) 14% of students have witnessed harassment at SOAS

1.4) 75% of students don't know who to report harassment at SOAS to

1.5) 83% of students don't know who to report to if they harassed near, but not on, campus

1.6) that the report found that women, LGBTQ, disabled and black students are more likely to experience harassment

1.7) that the Students' Union has a zero tolerance policy set out in the Dignity policy.

1.8) that students' trust in the SU to deal with reports of harassment is worryingly low, and confidence in the School is even lower

This Union Believes:

2.1) that all forms of harassment are completely unacceptable

2.2) that the union has failed to adequately tackle harassment in the university and create a space where students feel supported.

2.3) that there are currently inadequate measures and resources in place to deal with harassment

This Union Resolves:

3.1) to reaffirm our zero policy stance on harassment

3.2) to adopt the recommendations of these report relating to changes the School needs to make as campaigning priorities

3.3) to work to implement the recommendations set out in the report relating to changes the Students' Union needs to make

3.4) to repeat this harassment research on an annual basis to monitor the impact of these changes

4. Stop oppressing students in the Egyptian universities

Proposer: Mohamed Taha Seconder: Hannah Abdule

The Union notes:

- 1.1 -Students in Egypt don't have freedom of expression.
- 1.2 -Universities in Egypt are most of the time invaded by security forces and secret services.
- 1.3 -Tens of students have been expelled from their universities because of their political views and activities

The Union Believes:

- 2.1-Students in Egypt and around the world should have freedom of expression and should be able to express their views freely.
- 2.2-Security activities should be out of universities and student's shouldn't be targeted.
- 2.3-Students shouldn't be deprived from their right of education whatever circumstances are.

The Union Resolves:

- 3.1-Will send a message of support for students in Egypt in their struggle for freedoms.**
 - 3.2-Will send a message to the Egyptian embassy in London to denounce the recent attacks on some universities.**
 - 3.3-Will try to help any of those who deprived of the right to study in Egypt to know how they find their ways to study somewhere else whether in the UK or outside.**
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5. Change "Students with Disabilities' Officer" to "Disabled Students and Carers' Officer"

Proposer: Karmel Carey – 584498 Seconder: Roisin Crowley – 563459

This Union notes:

- 1.1 That disabled students are represented in the Union by the Students with Disabilities' Officers
- 1.2 That carer students don't currently have any official representation in the Union

This Union Believes:

- 2.1 That students who are carers face similar challenges to disabled students
- 2.2 That carer students are not given adequate representation
- 2.2 That giving carer students official representation in the Union would ensure that their interests are considered in making Union decisions

This Union resolves:

- 3.1 To change the role name of "Students with Disabilities' Officer" to "Disabled Students and Carers' Officer"**
 - 3.2 To change schedule 10.1 to "The DSC Officer shall represent the interests of students personally affected by disability (people who are disabled themselves, or who are a carer/close relation to someone who is disabled) to the Union and the School, particularly on issues of exclusion and prejudice on grounds of being affected by disability and its various intersections"**
 - 3.3 To change schedule 10.2 to "The DSC Officer shall liaise with Student Advice and Wellbeing to help improve facilities at SOAS for students personally affected by disability"**
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6. Revision of LGBTQ Officer schedule

Proposer: Tom King, 349872 Seconder: Grace Mason, 565820

This Union notes:

- 1.1 That the LGBTQ Students' Officer represents lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and queer students,
- 1.2 and that the current Union Schedules are outdated and do not reflect this

This Union Believes:

- 2.1 That the role of each liberation officer is to represent the interests and support the campaigns of the members of their liberation group.
- 2.2 That each liberation group should have the autonomy to decide the direction of their campaign.
- 2.3 That autonomy does not exclude non-self-defining students from engaging with each campaign.
- 2.4 That the Union should continue to encourage liberation officers to work as widely as possible with the Union community in order to tackle the intersectional nature of oppression and gain non-self-defining allies, but that the primary duty of liberation officers is to their liberation group and so these self-defining groups should determine each officers' campaigning agenda.

This Union resolves:

- 3.1 To amend Article 17 of the Union Schedules to reflect the above; replacing all instances of LGBT with LGBTQ and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered Students' with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Queer Students'**
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7. Procedural guidelines for the BDS Referendum at SOAS

Proposer: David Suber

Seconder: Kabir Joshi

Union Notes:

- 1.1 The SOAS SU has had policy on BDS (Boycott, divestment & sanctions) since 2005.
- 1.2 SOAS SU has campaigned actively on BDS since then.
- 1.3 In October 2014 a motion was passed at UGM calling for a consultative School-wide referendum on an academic boycott by SOAS of Israeli institutions.

Union Believes:

- 2.1 That in order to pressure the SOAS management to implement BDS, a school-wide referendum is necessary to make sure that every member of the SOAS community, student or not, has an equal say on the matter

Union Resolves:

- 3.1 To hold a referendum on 23rd-27th of February 2015
 - 3.2 The referendum will be open to all the SOAS community
 - 3.3 Voting should take place online and through the union ipad voting stall. Cleaners and all other outsourced staff will be provided with a paper ballot as they do not receive soas email addresses
 - 3.4 The voting will be done safely through previously used online systems
 - 3.5 There will be an independent returning officer, Sean Rillo Raczka (previous UGM Chair from Birkbeck Univeristy), who will calculate votes, ensure fair play and will not be involved in campaigning
 - 3.6 The returning officer shall hold a SOAS community debate before the referendum where both sides will be fairly heard, with speakers being from the SOAS community
 - 3.7 Any debates organised by the campaigns will be allowed at SOAS SU, but must adhere to the Safe Space Policy.
 - 3.8 The returning officer shall announce the results of the referendum online
 - 3.9 The question of the referendum shall be 'Should SOAS join an academic boycott of Israeli institutions?'
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8. Formation of a Research Students' Association (RSA)

Proposer: Mohamed Taha

Seconder: Ahmed Baya

This Union notes:

- 1.1) The creation of SOAS' Doctoral School from the academic year 2012/2013, with additional space dedicated to research students and a new managerial structure (Head of the Doctoral School);
- 1.2) That the Research Students Association formerly known as Research Students Society, formed in 2007, carries out a variety of activities, both social and academic-related, relevant to the interests of research students at SOAS, and has gained considerable visibility amongst the body of SOAS research students;
- 1.3) That the Students' Union currently provides and coordinates academic representation at departmental, faculty and School level for research students through the student reps system, and that the research student reps coordinate through the research reps forum.

This Union Believes:

- 2.1) The co-existence of the RSA and the research reps forum coordinated by the Students' Union has led to a certain level of internal competition over human resources and confusion about representational functions and responsibilities over the years;
- 2.2) An organisational structure for the research students representative body is needed with clearly defined responsibilities, which can promote consistency, accessibility, and efficient procedures, and which can provide a united, strong voice for the research students at SOAS.
- 2.3) The activities of the RSA have shown that there are interests specific to the PhDs, which fall under the objects clause of the constitution of the Student Union. To ensure continuity and enough funding, it is in the interest of the research students to integrate this work more effectively under the SU structures.
- 2.4) That, to avoid duplication of efforts and ensure continuity and better, more organized representation, it would be in the best interest of SOAS research students if the representative activities carried out by the research reps and the social, cultural and academic activities organized by the RSA could be brought together under one structure within the Students' Union structure.

This Union resolves:

- 3.1) To create a Research Students' Association from 2012/2013 as a sub-section within SOAS Students' Union, with the following structure:
 - a. An RSA Board, chaired by the newly created post of Research Students' Officer (part time officer, trustee and member of the executive committee of the Students' Union), and comprising three members of the Research Reps forum (one per each faculty) and three members from the Activities Committee of the RSA (former RSS); the RSA Board would facilitate the coordination between the two wings of the RSA, that of representation and that of activities, and would act as the main point of contact and negotiation between the new Doctoral School management and the body of research students;
 - b) A Research Reps forum, comprised of all the elected research student reps at departmental and faculty level; the Research

Reps forum would facilitate the coordination of all activities relating to the formal academic representation of research students within the School's structures, and would act as the primary forum for the articulation of research students' academic and work-related needs, demands and priorities at School level;

c) An Activities committee, comprised of volunteer students chosen by internal election to carry out different functions relating to the organization of social and academic activities for the benefit of research students.

3.2) That the internal organizational structures of the RSA shall be further outlined in the RSA Constitution, which will become part of the SOAS Students' Union Constitution Schedules, and that will be approved at the UGM in December 2014;

3.3) That all research students shall be automatically members of the RSA in virtue of their membership to SOAS Students' Union;

3.4) That the fundamental RSA activities will be funded from the budget of the Students' Union, and that an agreement will be sought with the Head of the Doctoral School to guarantee additional funding for the RSA activities from the School's budget.

9. Instate a Co-President Liberation Coordinator

Proposer: Hannah Slydel 541349

Seconder: Tom King 349827

This Union notes:

1.1 The SOAS Students' Union currently employs 3 full-time paid co-presidents including: Co-President Welfare and Campaigns; Co-President Activities and Events; Co-President Democracy and Education.

1.2 There are 14 unpaid part-time union executive officers.

Five of these officers are liberation officers. Liberation officers are elected to represent groups that experience structural oppression and social marginalisation. These are the Black Officer, Women's Officer, LGBTQ+ Officer, Disabilities Officer, and Anti-Racism.

1.3 Unlike other part-time officers, liberation officers do not have a Co-president to whom they can report, seek advice and share work with.

1.4 Liberation Officers work unpaid and part-time whilst completing their degrees.

1.5 The 2007-2011 Equality and Diversity Committee Attainment gap report found that:

"White students consistently had a higher proportion of people achieving both Firsts and Upper Seconds, the attainment gap for Firsts ranged from 8.06% (2009-10) to 13.87% (2008-09) and for Upper Seconds the gap was -1.4% (2010-11) to + 11.49% (2007-08). The white group also had consistently lower proportions of students either being awarded a Pass or who did not pass their Degree."

1.6 and noted that "additional analysis on the data available in 2010-11 indicated that there were no identifiable differences between the BME and white groups at entry to SOAS and therefore this effect appears to result from something within SOAS or during the students' time at SOAS."

1.7 "The gender attainment gap for Firsts ranges between 0.97% and 5.4% and shows no indication of reducing over time."

1.8 "Disabled students as a group appear to have a lower level of attainment than non-disabled SOAS students...the proportion of disabled students achieving a First has ranged from 7.5% - 15.2% over the last four years, but this compares with 12.6% - 15.1% of non-disabled students... 45.7% - 56.6% of disabled students achieved an Upper Second, compares with 54.8% - 68.6% of non-disabled students... The proportion of disabled students who did not pass their Degree (at the first opportunity - some will pass later) ranged between 8.7% - 22.6%; whereas the proportion of non-disabled students who did not pass their Degree ranged between 4.6% - 10.5%."

1.9 There was no data concerning lgbtq+ and working class students attainment gaps.

1.10 Point 8 of the Student's Union Educational Priorities is to [resolve] the 'BME Students' Attainment Gap'.

1.11 The 2014 SOAS SU Harassment Survey found that 16% of respondents had personally experienced harassment at SOAS and of those that had experienced or witnessed harassment, the highest percentage reported that this was sexist in nature (37.5%) , followed by racist (20.8%). Harassment was also homophobic (5.4%), ableist (4.8%) and transphobic (2.4%). 18.5% (31 respondents) stated 'other'.

1.12) 1 in 4 women experience domestic violence;

1.13 Women own less than 1% of the world's property;

1.14 Students from disadvantaged areas tend to do less well in higher education than those with the same prior educational attainment from more advantaged areas(HEFCE, 2014)

1.15 Currently, there is little or no official representation of students with insecure and/or temporary residency and visa status, working class and socio-economically oppressed students within the SOAS Students' union and Liberation campaigns.

1.16 The NUS 'Still in the Red' reports that higher fees discourage those from a low-income background from considering entering higher education.

1.17 Only 1 in 20 disabled people are in FE or HE, compared to 1 in 10 for the rest of the population;

1.18 One third of disabled people do not feel they can enter education because of their disability

Nationally and at SOAS, people that identify into liberation groups are less likely to access higher paid jobs and when they do experience pay discrimination:

Pay Gaps at SOAS:

1.19 13.5% between white and BME employees. This compares unfavourably with the -2.2% mean pay gap between white and BME staff across all HEIs, reported in the ECU Report, 2010. 2010.

1.20 Staff who have declared a disability are earning on average 4.6% less than staff who have not declared a disability. This compares unfavourably with the -0.5% mean pay gap between Disabled and Non-Disabled staff across all HEIs, reported in the ECU Report, 2010

1.21 The gender pay gap between full-time staff is 12% and the part-time is 7%

This Union believes:

2.1 As indicated, there is significant nationwide problem of students that identify as members of liberation groups being faced with prejudice and bigotry that causes serious damage not only to their time at university but also their wellbeing.

2.2 SOAS Students' Union should work to the best of the ability to eliminate such structures of oppression and marginalisation within the union and school.

2.3 As the schools commitment to supporting members of liberation groups is marginal at best and the counselling and welfare services are overstretched, students often seek advice and support from liberation officers.

2.4 As part-time liberation officers are also completing degrees, they are often stretched for time, energy and resources and their ability to commit to their position and campaigns are often compromised. This is detrimental to the physical and emotional well-being of their constituents.

2.5 Historically, the labour of people that identify into liberation groups has been undervalued, as reflected in the pay gaps, and is often unrecognised e.g. Housework. The SU should not perpetuate this.

2.6 The Attainment Gap report notes that the BME Attainment gap 'appears to result from something within SOAS'. The SOAS SU has outlined its commitment to resolving the BME attainment gap, yet the Black Officer does not have a Co-President to whom they can consult and share work with. The Black Officer is therefore expected to tackle the structures of racism and issues that intersect to produce the attainment gap, alone, unpaid and whilst completing a degree.

2.7 The same can be said for the disabilities, women's, anti-racism and lgbtq+ officer.

2.8 This is not humanly possible.

The Union resolves:

3.1 Mandate the SOAS executive to secure funding for the Liberation Officer by lobbying the university and union during the current academic year.

3.2 To put the Liberation Coordinator in a full time contract in which they are

a) Paid for up to 35 hours per week of their time.

b) Paid the same rate as all other SOAS full-time Sabbatical Officers.

c) Paid as full-time Sabbatical officers, and not required to treat payment as coming out of their respective liberation campaign budget.

3.3 The full-time elected liberation officers shall remain in office for a term of one year commencing in accordance with the Schedules. The term of office may be shorter or longer on a transitional basis to coincide with an alteration of the year start or end. Subject to a transitional change in the year of office, an elected liberation officer may be re-elected for a maximum further term of one year by the self-defining members of the union at an election to be held in accordance with the Schedules. For the avoidance of doubt, an Officer Trustee's terms of office may be either consecutive or non-consecutive.

10. Creating a new part-time executive position: Officer of Sports

Proposer: Theodor Salvesen, 596859

Secunder: Kabir Joshi, kj9

This Union notes:

1.1 That organising sports activity at SOAS takes up a lot of the Union employees' and captains' time.

1.2. That captains end up doing many administrative tasks, compromising their ability to improve the actual sports development of individuals and teams.

1.3. That the existing infrastructure does not have the capacity to promote sports at SOAS in a way that inspires more students to join sports activities.

1.4. That the amount of casual and organised sports offered at SOAS has potential of expansion and the inclusion of more students.

This Union Believes:

2.1. That despite the recent introduction of the 'Activities & Events Co-ordinator' as a Union staff member, the Union lacks an elected position to represent students interested in pursuing sports at SOAS.

2.2. That a part-time elected position on the executive board dedicated to sports is a good way of improving sports development at SOAS

2.3. That such a position would represent the sports teams' interests in a way that would ensure increased exposure and promotion of sports and physical activity to the student body

2.4. That both casual and competitive sports would benefit from this.

2.5. That more students would benefit from taking part in physical activity through the university, and a new Executive Officer of Sports position will help expand and improve the sports services offered to every student.

2.6. That increased physical activity will benefit the individual student, also in their academic progress. Having a dedicated officer for this will help more students participate in organised physical activity.

This Union resolves:

- 3.1. To create a new position for the SU executive board, dedicated to sports.
 - 3.2. To have this position work as a link between the SU executive body and the students.
 - 3.3. To name this position Sports Officer.
 - 3.4. To have the Sports Officer elected right from the next SU elections in March 2015.
 - 3.5. The Sports Officer's tasks within the union will be as in the following description:
 - a)- The Sports Officer shall represent the interests of students engaged in sports and physical activity (both competitive and casual) to the Students' Union Exec and the School.
 - b)- The Sports Officer shall work as a liaison between the Sports Union (a union of all SOAS sports teams) and the Co-President of Activities and Events, the Sports and Societies Co-ordinator (Union member of staff) and the SU Executive Body.
 - c)- The Sports Officer shall work towards ensuring the further development and increased participation in sports through the Students' Union.
 - d)- The Sports Officer shall run campaigns and events linked to SOAS Sports.
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11. Creating a new part-time executive position: Class officer

Proposer: Adam Barr Seconder: Grace Mason

This Union notes:

- 1.1: SOAS Students' Union has a number of part-time officers who are elected to represent different groups of students, however it does not currently provide any representation for students on the basis of their socio-economic class.
- 1.2: Class oppression has only increased under the government's austerity measures.
- 1.3: Class oppression can be seen within the education system in many ways, including (but not limited to) inadequate student loans and the lack of paid internships which heavily restricts the opportunities that working-class students have in order to gain valuable work experience.
- 1.4: That a Higher Education Statistical Authority report stated that: "Students from disadvantaged areas tend to do less well in higher education than those with the same prior educational attainment from more advantaged areas."
- 1.5: That former private school students make-up the overwhelming majority of people engaged in a number of professions, including government, law and journalism.

This Union believes:

- 2.1: Socio-economic issues create inequality and affect the extent to which Working-Class students are able to equally access their university education to the same extent as their peers.
- 2.2: That all students are entitled to and deserve adequate representation from their student union.
- 2.3: That socio-economic issues are a liberation issue and affect students in different ways, according to their differing inter-sectional identities.
- 2.4: That class oppression is a global issue and that the working class officer should take this into account when performing their duties.

This Union resolves

- 3.1: Create a new part-time student union officer, 'Working-Class Students' Officer, to work inter-sectionally with the other liberation officers within the SU to work on issues relating to socio-economic circumstances and equal access to university education.
- 3.2: Hold a consultation with students who identify as working-class with regards to the suitability of the title 'Working-Class Students' Officer', and whether or not there is another preferred title.
- 3.3: To change the SU constitution and schedules to reflect this change and include the job description in appendix 1

Appendix 1:

1. The working class officer shall represent the interests of working class and other economically deprived students at SOAS
 2. The working class officer shall liaise with the school to improve accessibility, admission and student experience, and welfare for working class students.
 3. The working class officer will run campaigns and events appropriate to the constituency
 4. The working class officer will work with other liberation officers to ensure their work reflects the intersectional nature of different students' identities.
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12. Counter Terrorism and Security Bill: Students, not suspects

Proposer: Saqib Ali Rafiq – 598748 Seconder: Monjurul Hoque – 538020

This Union notes:

- 1.1 That on 26 November 2014, the Home Secretary Theresa May introduced the Counter-Terrorism and Security Bill (CTSB) to Parliament highlighting some revised and new counter-terrorism powers that would be placed on a statutory basis.
- 1.2 That the CTSB seeks to make the controversial Prevent and Channel strategies statutory.
- 1.3 That academics and campaigners fear the CTSB will criminalise ideas and create a culture where students are unwilling to speak out.

1.4 That the National Union of Students have condemned the CTSB and described the Prevent strategy and Channel policies as “further developing a culture of suspicion and surveillance on campuses, whilst also potentially conflicting with institutions’ duties to promote freedom of speech, by making them overly risk-averse and unwilling to engage in important topics of discussion.”

1.5 That Universities UK have expressed concerns about academic freedom in their parliamentary briefing on the counter terrorism and security bill.

1.6 That Prevent Strategy guidance in 2011 recommended to university staff, lecturers and chaplains to report to the police any Muslim students who are isolated or depressed.

1.7 That the Prevent Strategy currently exists and operates on most university campuses.

1.8 That Islamophobia has been on the rise in the UK and mainland Europe over the last decade.

1.9 That a vote on whether to make the counter-terrorism policy known as the Prevent Strategy into legislation takes place on the 29th January.

1.10 That according to the current Prevent Strategy, potential indicators of “radicalism” or “extremism” include:

“A need for identity, meaning and belonging.”

“A desire for political or moral change.”

“Relevant mental health issues.”

1.11 That through the Prevent Strategy, universities will be legally responsible for the ideologies of their students.

1.12 That the Prevent Strategy has been widely criticised for demonising Muslim students on campus.

1.13 That on university campuses, the Prevent Strategy enables the possibility of a No Platform policy being extended to any member deemed “radical” or “extreme” by the university, with no consultation.

This Union Believes:

2.1 That students are not suspects.

2.2 That students should be offered help and not victimised for suffering from mental health issues.

2.3 That rushed laws are often ill-thought out and poorly scrutinised.

2.4 That any expectation by the state for academic staff to be involved in monitoring their students is deeply worrying, and could have a chilling effect on relations between staff and students.

2.5 That the CTSB could serve to isolate many students who already feel that the only avenue through which the Government will engage them is ‘anti-radicalisation’ initiatives, resulting in further alienation and disaffection.

2.6 The CTSB discourages free expression and analysis of ideas. Academics, as well as anyone in a public sector job, should not have to be part of this surveillance.

2.7 The implementation of the Prevent Strategy on campus will not only isolate Muslim students but undermine the civil liberties of other groups such as environmental, political and humanitarian activists.

2.8 The monitoring and exclusion of ideas from public debate opposes the basic function of universities; introducing students to a variety of opinions and encouraging them to analyse and debate them.

2.9 The policy significantly undermines the freedom and activities of university staff and students.

2.10 That our public services (i.e. hospitals, schools, universities, prison services) should exist to serve the general public and not be used against the very people it exists to serve.

This Union Resolves:

3.1 That SOAS SU support an enquiry into the legality of the proposals under the Equality Act 2010 and the Education Act No. 2 1986.

3.2 That SOAS SU should issue a public statement condemning the Prevent Strategy and the Government's Counter-Terrorism and Security Bill.

3.3 For SOAS SU to work with campus trade unions on combating the Prevent Strategy and lobby them to condemn the CTSB.

3.4 To mandate Student officers to lobby the university to be more open and transparent about how they are engaging with Prevent, Channel and other similar initiatives. This involves:

- Demanding publications of how the policy is operating within the university and Students' Union.
- This includes access to materials used to train staff and students.
- Holding consultations with the student body regarding how this affects students.

3.5 That SOAS SU and the student officers will not engage with the Prevent Strategy and cut any links it indirectly has with the programme via the university.

3.6 That SOAS SU will educate students on the dangers of the CTSB and the Prevent Strategy.

3.7 That the SOAS SU NUS delegation will take a motion condemning the CTSB to NUS National Conference 2015.

AMENDMENT - 3.8 To lobby staff and the institution on this issue

13. SOAS Supports Sex Workers' Rights

Proposer: Lauren Tapp 613347

Seconder: Hannah Slydel 541349

This Union notes:

1.1. Sex work refers to escorting, lap dancing, stripping, pole dancing, pornography, webcams, adult modelling, phone sex, and selling sex (on and off the street)[1].

1.2. Selling sex is not illegal in the UK – but it is criminalised[2]. Almost everything that sex workers do to stay safe is illegal[3].

1.3. Financial reasons, and any criminal record gain due to the criminalisation of sex work, are usually cited as the main reason for staying in sex work[4].

1.4. There are a disproportionate number of disabled people, migrants, especially undocumented or semi-documented migrants, LGBT people and single parents (the vast majority of whom are women) involved in sex work[5].

1.5. The financial cost of being disabled, the cost of childcare, the cost of medical transition and hormones, racism in the workplace, the vulnerability of undocumented migrants to exploitation in other forms of work and the prejudice faced by LGBT and disabled people undoubtedly contribute to this overrepresentation.

1.6. The criminalisation of sex workers' clients, known as the Swedish Model, was recently passed in the Northern Irish Assembly, despite government-commissioned research showing that 98% of sex workers working in Northern Ireland did not want this introduced[6].

1.7. Organisations that support the decriminalisation of sex work include the World Health Organisation[7], UN Women[8], the Global Commission on HIV and the Law[9], Human Rights Watch, the NUS Disabled Students' Campaign[10] and the Royal College of Nurses[11].

1.8. The Global Alliance Against Traffic in Women opposes introducing criminal penalties against the clients of sex workers. Their research found that criminalising clients does not reduce sex work or trafficking, but infringes on sex workers' rights & obstructs anti-trafficking efforts[12].

1.9. The decriminalisation of prostitution was introduced in New Zealand in 2003[13] by Labour MP Tim Barnett, who called the debate on decriminalisation the most significant debate on a moral issue since the decriminalisation of homosexuality[14].

1.10. The criminalisation of sex workers' clients has been proven to lead to further distrust of the police amongst sex workers, a willingness of sex workers to engage in more risky behaviour/safety procedures out of desperation, and does not reduce overall levels of prostitution[15].

This Union believes:

2.1. Sex work is work. Sex work is the exchange of money for labour, like any other job. It is different because it is currently criminalised and stigmatised.

2.2. People should be free to choose what they do with their time, their labour and their bodies. If they have fewer choices, our solution should be to expand their choices, not take options away through further criminalisation.

2.3. The right of consenting adults to engage in sexual relations is of no business to anyone but the people involved.

2.4. The moral panic around sex work and prostitution echoes the moral panic that was present when homosexuality was in the process of being decriminalised. It is no coincidence that many who argue for harsh anti-prostitution laws under the guise of feminism also voted against equal marriage and similar civil rights measures.

2.5. With the rise in living costs, the increase in tuition fees, and the slashing of benefits for disabled people, it is highly likely that some students do sex work alongside their studies.

2.6. The lack of funding for postgraduate education makes it likely that some students use sex work as a means to fund their postgraduate degrees.

2.7. Stigma against sex work means that sex workers are less likely to seek out help and support if and when they need it.

2.8. Regardless of their reasons for entering into sex work, all sex workers deserve to have their rights protected and to be able to do their jobs safely. This includes sex workers who do not find their job 'empowering'. Whether or not you enjoy a job should have no bearing on the rights you deserve while you do it.

2.9. SOAS have a proud history of standing for social justice and for the rights of workers across the world to do their jobs safely and to unionise, regardless of their student status.

2.10. The Stonewall Riots, which kick started the LGBT Pride movement NUS proudly champions today were started by Martha P. Johnson and other trans sex workers of colour.

2.11. Tim Barnett was correct in asserting that "prostitution is inevitable, and no country has succeeded in legislating it out of existence"[16]. Sweden cannot show a reduction in the number of sex workers.

2.12. Legislation targeted at combatting poverty, austerity, universalising childcare and a living wage, sufficient social housing, and accessible education funding and living grants, is more likely to ensure those who do not wish to work in the sex industry do not feel forced to by economic circumstances.

2.13. Decriminalisation would ensure that sex workers feel able to report unsafe clients or violence at work without the worry of criminal repercussions, that several sex workers can work together for safety, and that those who wish to leave the sex industry are not left with criminal records as a result of their job.

2.14. The pushes for legislation which would criminalise the purchase of sex are often spearheaded by anti-choice, anti-LGBT right-wing fundamentalists, working with radical feminists[17].

2.15. Legislation of this kind is often brought forward in the name of anti-trafficking programmes – in reality it is primarily being used to target immigrant sex workers for raids and deportations.

2.16. The ILO estimates that over 75% of trafficking globally is into industries such as fisheries, agriculture and domestic work - not into sex work[18]. An effective anti-trafficking strategy would strengthen the rights of all migrant workers in order to crack down on exploitation by managers. Treating the sex industry as exceptional leaves the majority of exploited migrant workers out in the cold - and the police aren't the allies of migrant workers, whether they're sex workers or agricultural workers.

2.17. A recent example of how simplistic 'anti-trafficking' policies harm migrant sex workers was the Soho raids – 250 police broke down doors of brothels operating in Soho, dragging handcuffed immigrant sex workers in their underwear out on the street. No evidence of trafficking was found and the flats have now been reopened, but women were deported against their will as 'trafficking victims'.

2.18. The Joint Committee on Human Rights report on Human Trafficking confirmed that "victims often find themselves treated as immigration offenders" and face detention and removals[19].

2.19. Criminalising the purchase of sex puts sex workers, especially those who work on the street, in danger. It is impossible to criminalise an aspect of someone's job without it having a negative impact on the person at work[20].

This Union Resolves:

3.1. To support and campaign for the full decriminalisation of sex work.

3.2. To campaign against any attempt to introduce the Nordic Model into the UK.

3.3. To support and be led by sex worker led organisations, such as the English Collective of Prostitutes, Sex Worker Open University and SCOT-PEP, who work to improve the lives of sex workers across the UK.

[1] From here on, references are made to 'sex work' in this motion refer to full service sex work – escorting, prostitution, etc. Other strands of sex work are stigmatised, but not criminalised in the way that full service sex work is criminalised.

[2] Similar laws operate in Scotland, Wales & England. Prostitution (the exchange of sexual services for money) is not illegal, but associated activities (soliciting in a public place, kerb crawling, operating a brothel) are. The main laws around sex work in the UK are: the Vagrancy Act of 1824; the Sexual Offences Act of 1956 and the Street Offences Act of 1959 (England and Wales); the Burgh Police (Scotland) Act of 1892 and the Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act of 1976, Sexual Offences Act 2003, Policing and Crime Act 2009, Crime and Disorder Act 1998, Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2002, Proceeds of Crime Act 2002.

[3] See <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/jan/06/prostitutes-criminalised> & <http://sabotagetimes.com/people/sheila-farmer-and-the-brothel-that-never-was/>. Sheila Farmer is a disabled sex worker who entered the industry after her disability left her unable to work – working with friends for safety after being raped, she was charged with brothel keeping but the charges were eventually dropped after she began to campaign publicly about what she had been put through by attackers, the police and the authorities. Her experiences are not uncommon.

[4] <http://www.dojni.gov.uk/index/publications/publication-categories/pubs-criminal-justice/prostitution-report-nov-update.pdf>, p.8; <http://www.justice.govt.nz/policy/commercial-property-and-regulatory/prostitution/prostitution-law-review-committee/publications/plrc-report/documents/report.pdf>, p.15

[5] Safety First Coalition

[6] <http://www.dojni.gov.uk/index/publications/publication-categories/pubs-criminal-justice/prostitution-report-nov-update.pdf>, p.11

[7] http://www.who.int/hiv/mediacentre/feature_story/sti_guidelines/en/

[8] <http://sexualrightsinitiative.com/2013/sri-partners/sri-welcomes-un-womens-strong-position-on-sex-work-sexual-exploitation-and-trafficking-in-persons/>

[9] <http://www.unaids.org/en/resources/presscentre/featurestories/2012/july/20120711lawcommission>

[10] Policy passed 11/11/14

[11] <http://www.theguardian.com/society/2005/apr/27/health.crime>

[12] http://www.gaatw.org/publications/MovingBeyond_SupplyandDemand_GAATW2011.pdf

[13] Prostitution Reform Act 2003

[14] http://www.parliament.nz/en-nz/pb/debates/debates/47HansD_20030625_00001319/prostitution-reform-bill-%E2%80%94-procedure-third-reading

[15] <http://www.dojni.gov.uk/index/publications/publication-categories/pubs-criminal-justice/prostitution-report-nov-update.pdf>; http://www.parliament.nz/en-nz/pb/debates/debates/47HansD_20030625_00001319/prostitution-reform-bill-%E2%80%94-procedure-third-reading; <http://prostitutescollective.net/2014/11/05/victory-amendment-criminalise-sex-workers-clients-defeated/>; <http://prostitutescollective.net/2009/02/04/letter-from-tim-barnett-former-new-zealand-mp-on-the-policing-and-crime-bill-2/>; <http://prostitutescollective.net/2014/10/30/urgent-mps-trying-criminalise-clients/>; *The National Board of Health & Welfare, 2008*

[16] <http://prostitutescollective.net/2009/02/04/letter-from-tim-barnett-former-new-zealand-mp-on-the-policing-and-crime-bill-2/>

[17] E.g. the Democratic Unionist Party, CARE, Ruhama, End Demand.

[18] http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---declaration/documents/publication/wcms_214472.pdf

[19] <http://prostitutescollective.net/2014/10/30/urgent-mps-trying-criminalise-clients/>; *Twenty-Sixth report of session, 2005-6, Vol. 1*

[20] Safety First Coalition

14. World Social Forum 2015

Proposer: Simon Campbell, 565510

Seconder: Giulia Valori, 572631

This Union notes:

- 1.1) The World Social Forum is an open space for people, social movements and activist networks to meet.
- 1.2) It provides the chance for over 4500 organisations, from La Via Campesina to the campaign for a free Western Sahara, to build links of solidarity and share ideas.
- 1.3) Since 2001 it has facilitated discussion and action on issues relating to neo-liberalism, imperialism and global injustice.
- 1.4) This year's Forum will be held between 24th and 28th of March in Tunis.

This Union Believes:

- 2.1) The ideals and aims of the Forum are interlinked with the issues studied and campaigned for here at SOAS.
- 2.2) As with the group that attended last year, SOAS students can make a positive contribution to the Forum through attending events and hosting our own workshop.
- 2.3) The price of travel and accommodation present a substantial cost, and therefore it is important that we work to make attendance accessible to all who wish to engage

This Union Resolves:

- 3.1) To support students wishing to attend and assist in advertising the Forum to the wider student body.**
 - 3.2) To set up a society which will organise the trip and provide some form of feedback afterwards.**
 - 3.3) To fundraising money in order to cover expenses and allow people to attend.**
-

15. Support Solar SOAS

Proposer: Clare Birkett 608006

Seconder: Isobel Annan 565486

This Union notes:

- 1.1) Clean energy has to treble by 2050 (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, October 2014).
- 1.2) SOAS has committed to reducing its energy consumption by 80% by 2050 and has pledged that it "will actively seek to embed good environmental practice at an institutional level" (Carbon Management Plan).
- 1.3) Currently, SOAS's heating and electricity is generated by fossil fuels (some in house).
- 1.4) This adds to the crisis of climate change- greenhouse gases have majorly contributed to the fact that 14 of the 15 hottest years on Earth occurred this century, and there are already an estimated 400,000 deaths worldwide each year caused by climate change.
- 1.5) In addition, by buying from the grid, our university is supporting energy companies whose profits have leapt from £8 per customer in 2009 to an estimated £102 this year, while energy prices have increased a massive 30% in the last four years. Students are amongst those most affected by these rising energy prices.
- 1.6) There is 639m² of unused roofspace across SOAS's buildings. This unused roofspace could accommodate enough solar panels to generate around 65kWp of energy, 14 times more energy than the average home uses on lights and electricity over a year.
- 1.7) Making Solar SOAS a reality would make SOAS the first university in the UK to have a community owned solar panel network. The energy manager at SOAS is keen, and has experience in setting up solar panel systems at another university (not cooperatively owned), and thus is a great asset to the project.
- 1.8) Other cooperatives and programmes such as the massively successful Brixton Energy Cooperative, see great potential for the project, have already provided non-financial support and expertise, and are keen to get on board.

The Union Believes:

- 2.1) Solar SOAS would be an extremely exciting and concrete way to tackle climate change; distance SOAS from the grip of the profiteering Big 6 energy companies; reach SOAS's environmental commitments; enhance the sense of community at SOAS and provide students with opportunities to gain valuable and practical experience in the running of a co-op.
- 2.2) SOAS has to take the lead and embrace renewable energy now because:
 - a) The fight against climate change can't wait, and SOAS is known and respected for being at the forefront of innovation and positive changes.
 - b) With fossil fuel divestment at SOAS imminent, and the introduction of new environment related academic programmes, SOAS has to go green in order to remain a credible and coherent institution.
 - c) Many SOAS academic programmes study climate change affected areas, and most critique the profiteering ethos of businesses such as the Big 6 energy companies. In addition, the SOAS student body and faculty comes from diverse backgrounds, with a significant proportion from climate change affected areas. Installing a cooperatively run solar panel network would show that SOAS is putting its money where its mouth is.
- 2.3) This is a matter of social justice, as reducing carbon emissions will benefit many people around the world who are already being affected by climate change.

The Union Resolves:

- 3.1. To support the efforts of Solar SOAS to develop a community clean energy project based on solar power, which could provide clean energy for the use of SOAS' students and staff or be sold to the National Grid to offset SOAS' carbon emissions.**
- 3.2. To support the project's need for publicity and awareness raising around campus, including helping to promote a student**

and staff survey, as well as public consultations which will gauge community interest and aspirations for the project, helping to shape its progression.

Minutes from previous UGM

1) Peter Carlisle (615899) - Outside bins get filled with paper plates from the Harekrishna food after every lunch - people then trough plates and unfinished food on the floor, making a mess.

- We need to respect the outside space more.

- We show more respect to Dominic, who gives SOAS students food every day.

- We need to waste less food. Ask Dominic for less if you know you won't finish your plate.

- Proposal of more bins will be brought at next UGM

2) Adam Barr (296340) - follow up from motion in previous UGM - He will write letter to Cher

Report from Sabbatical Officers

1) David Report

-Reps - all elected

-Exam Feedback paper being made and discussed at School committees

2) Georgie Report:

-equality and diversity trainings - update

-dinwiddy problems - discussed at meeting with sanctuary management

-Harassment reports - available online

-Hardship funds - update

-Protests of SOAS students -update

-Justice for Cleaners protest at Governing Body - in house - proposal reviewed

-Fossil Free campaign - set up working group to report back to working group

-Free Education - occupation at UniversitiesUK by SOAS and UCL students

-Protests in Warwick - police brutality - Warwick occupied

-Jason-Mayer Lee campaign vs his victimization

-Fuel Poverty protest - update

3) Kabir Report:

-200 Clubs and Societies at SOAS - UCL only 137

-Great talks by societies - recorded an on website

-BDS referendum - working group - 12th Jan Ilan Pappé launch

-End of term Party

-SOAS Drama Soc first event

All Reports Accepted

Report from Executive Officers

The following Executive Officers gave a verbal report to the UGM.

Black Students officer :

- Black History Month report

Environment officers:

- Waste bins motion at next UGM

- Bike fixing workshop taking place every 2 weeks

- vegetarian meal deal with Khaled

- different recycled paper in the library

- Water fountains in the library from next year

Academic Affairs officers

- student reps - update

- talk this evening: A century of knowledge production at SOAS: Politics

LGBTQ officer

- Trans day of remembrance held at soas

- HIV testing week

- World aids day

- Harassment report - main findings: 75 per cent of students don't know who to report to when victim of harassment

Accommodations officer

- Dinwiddy complaints

- Looking at equality and diversity complaints

PGR officer

- mental health problems

- Research representation on all committees

- Scholarship webpage of soas more clear after meeting with scholarship

department

- Preparing a Field Work conference
- Support to the Fractional For Fair Play campaign

All Reports Accepted

Motions:

- 1) Solidarity with the Students Killed in Mexico - ¡Vivos se los llevaron, vivos los queremos!**

Speech For – Giovanna De Meneghi (616846) Speech Against – none

Moved to a Vote

Motion Passes

- 2) Change "Students with Disabilities' Officer" to "Disabled Students and Carers' Officer"**

no quorum - coming back at next UGM

- 3) Build a new smoking area in the Students' Union Bar**

Speech For – Kabir Joshi (296327) Speech Against – Mohamed Taha (576852)

Speech For – Bilal Ahmed (573672) Speech Against – Adam Barr (296340)

Speech For – Tom Oliver (537871) Speech Against – Peter Carlisle (615899)

Summation - Kabir Joshi (296327) Moved to a Vote

For – 39 Against – 4 Abstentions - 0

Motion Passes

- 4) Procedural Motion: vote to end meeting to go to Senate House protest**

Proposed by – Adam Barr (296340)

Moved to a **Vote**

Motions Falls

Call For Quorum:

Proposed by – Adam Barr (296340)

Quorum not met

UGM will end after emergency motions

- 5) Solidarity with Warwick Students**

Motion Passes

- 6) Victimization of SOAS Alumn for involvement in Cleaners Campaigns**

Motion Passes

- 7) Solidarity with the Syrians refugees in Calais**

Motion Passes

Meeting Ends

All motions not discussed will go to next UGM in January