

Motion Title: Separate the Public from The Powerful: Bye Law 12 Amendment.

Proposer: Callum Heath (Union rep- History society)

Seconded: Chanel Munroe (Union Council Chair)

Summary:

Following the passing of the Separate the public from powerful motion during last union council (23/11/23), it's clear that the majority of the UEA student body is rightly committed to distinguishing ordinary civilians from the actions of their governments. However, in the light of rising discrimination of particular groups both at UEA and the UK, it's clear that a tougher stance is needed. By codifying the separation of ordinary civilians including students from the activities of their government into the UEASU Byelaws and code of conduct, students will be given extra protection to prevent them from discrimination, particularly in the light of present conflicts

Council Notes: - The passing of Separate the public from the powerful motion during November's union council (23/11/23) demonstrated a commitment from the SU union council to mandate student welfare in the light of rising discrimination part motivated by present conflicts.

(1) - The Hamas attacks on Israel on the 7th of October caused a rise in cases of Islamophobia and Antisemitism both in UEA and the UK. The Community Security Trust counted the highest rates of antisemitism since records began in 1984. 1,019 hate crimes were recorded in the UK in the month of October, likely to increase by December.

(2) Islamophobic incidents have increased 600% since the Hamas attacks.

(3) - Hamas, defined as a terrorist group by the UK government, have used innocent civilians in Gaza and Israel to push their divisive agenda.

(4) - The main cause of democratic decline in the world is wars and coups caused by illiberal incumbents who are not representative of the civilians of their country. In 2023, 84/195 countries surveyed had fully democratic governments according to the Freedom in the World survey.

(5) It must be noted that even democratic countries do not represent the views of every citizen

Council Believes:

-You cannot hold the public accountable for the actions or views of their respective government, regardless of the extent at which democratic norms are met.

- To prevent holding people accountable for their government's actions and views, concrete policy measures are required including disciplinary action.

- Discrimination against nationality needs to be viewed separately but with equal worth to discrimination against race.

- Terrorist groups will never represent the views of citizens, regardless of their claims.

- Conflict should never be used to promote discrimination against national and religious groups.

- The SU byelaws are the strongest way to promote the principle of separating the public from the actions of governments.

- Students encouraging violent uprisings against national groups are not representative of the student body.

- The code of conduct, while correctly ensuring racism does not spread, needs to make clearer discrimination against nationalities, especially when concerning the activities of non-representative governments.

Council Resolves:

- Add the following to byelaw 12 section 2.18 (Examples of racial harassment):

- 1.) Assuming or mocking a person's beliefs and attitudes based on their national identity
- 2.) Refusing to communicate with a student because of their national identity or background
- 3.) Holding students accountable for actions or beliefs held by their or any other national governments, including students from democratic countries
- 4.) Advocating the incitement of violence towards any specific, racial, ethnic, or national group

- Add to Code of Conduct section (Byelaw 12- Section freedom of speech):

- 1.) Reminds members that advocacy or support for terrorist groups defined by the UK government is not protected under freedom of speech and is illegal under UK law.

(6) And to renumber the bye laws accordingly

Sources:

1. Updated Union Council Agenda Nov 23.pdf (1)
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<https://theconversation.com/how-hamas-weaponised-palestinians-despair-215468> (4)
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