

MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS

UNION COUNCIL PLENARY

November 2015

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ANTI-RACISM AND THE REFUGEE CRISIS

Anti-racism and the refugee crisis

COUNCIL BELIEVES

1. The refugee crisis today is the most serious since the Second World War, with millions travelling to Europe to escape civil and imperialist war.
2. Thousands of people have died as part of this process, whether drowning in the Mediterranean, subject to the horrors of refugee camps or up against the borders of 'Fortress Europe'.
3. A series of horrific shootings and suicide bombings saw at least 130 people killed in six sites around the French capital, Paris, on 13/11/15. There has also been attacks in other cities across the world.
4. As well as refugees, Muslims are being targeted as a threat to 'British values', with attacks on them increasing by 70% over the last year in London alone.

COUNCIL FURTHER BELIEVES

1. That the rhetoric employed by Western leaders regarding refugees is nothing short of racist, and is – as said by UN Human Rights Commissioner Zeid Ra'ad al Hussein – reminiscent of pre-Holocaust attitudes towards European Jews.
2. There has been a racist backlash towards Muslims and refugees who are wrongly being blamed for the attacks in Paris and labelled as terrorists.
3. The Prevent agenda is racist and seeks to use attacks, like the ones in Paris, to justify greater surveillance of the Muslim community – effectively branding them as the problem in British society.
4. The Conservative Government decision to allow 20,000 Syrians into Britain over the next 5 years, exclusively from refugee camps in the region surrounding Syria, is far short of what is necessary and shirks the responsibility Britain has to refugees in a region destroyed by our wars.
5. Far from being full, Britain's land is only 1% developed, and 600,000 homes are empty.
6. Scholarship schemes represent a way in which refugees can safely travel to Europe, and engage in an education denied by war.
7. Stand Up To Racism has been central in fighting for solidarity with refugees and against the scapegoating of Muslims.

COUNCIL RESOLVES

1. To lobby the government to allow *significantly* more refugees into Britain.
2. To issue a letter condemning the racist rhetoric employed by David Cameron and Home Secretary Theresa May.
3. To call upon our university to create at least ten scholarships for refugees.
4. Support the NUS day of action against Prevent on December 7th called by NUS, NUS Black Students Campaign, Defend the Right to Protest, The Federation of Student Islamic Societies and The #StudentsnotSuspects Tour.
5. To support Stand Up to Racism and the UN anti-racism day of action demonstration in London on March 19th.

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6. Anti-fascist organisation Unite against Fascism (UAF) will be hosting their annual conference on February 6th 2016, part of the discussion there will consider both PREVENT and the refugee crisis. Birkbeck SU will send at least five some people to the conference to participate in the discussion.

SECRETARY'S NOTE

1. This is an ordinary motion that proposes a policy stance and can be agreed by a simple majority vote of the Council.
2. The motion can be amended: in advance, substantive amendments can be submitted by Thursday 26 November at 5pm; manuscript amendments may be accepted on the day at the meeting at the discretion of the chair. All amendments require one proposer and one seconder.
3. Debate on the motion and any amendments is subject to Standing Orders.

AMENDMENT A

COUNCIL BELIEVES

- Phrases such as those implying "Western imperialist powers" leading an "imperialist war" are responsible for Daesh are very very concerning about such is that it is exactly the very terminology that jihadist training videos use; the kind of thing Anjem Choudary says. It is outrageous and insensitive, so close to the recent tragedy in Paris, to suggest the West brought such violence on themselves, but rather radical Muslim teachers, may it be stressed, but radical preachers, have been promoting this hate for centuries, and the Iraq war was just the latest excuse for conflict.

- It is outrageous and insensitive, so close to the recent tragedy in Paris, to suggest the West brought such violence on themselves, but rather radical Muslim teachers, I stress not all, but radical preachers, have been promoting this hate for centuries, using exactly terms such as "Western imperialist powers", and the Iraq war was just the latest excuse for conflict. This Council would not condone the not so distant IRA attacks on London

COUNCIL RESOLVES

- Any jihadist apologism and related terminology or ideas have no place in the in this democratic assembly.
- This Council in no way supports the notion that the West is responsible for the terror attacks by Daesh or other extremists.

AMENDMENT B

COUNCIL BELIEVES

- Days after hundreds of fellow European Union citizens were massacred in the nearby city of Paris, this Council absolutely cannot demand that we reduce security measures. The families have not finished

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mourning; children lost their mummy and daddy they will have to grow up never seeing them again, always feeling something is missing.

- We have had such attacks on British soil before, and we do not want them again; it's only reasonable, sensible and logical that we take measures to protect ourselves.
- A key player in this opposition to the Prevent antiterrorism strategy is called Tasnime Akunjee. This is the man who represents the families of the three teenage 'jihadi brides' from east London, who only recently fought for Daesh; an enemy of our state. This man is an extremist with links to Cage, who sympathise with Jihadi John. This is the man who said Lee Rigby, our British soldier tragically killed on our streets was an actor by intelligence services.
- The fact of life is that people need to be searched at airports, and despite what this motion suggests, these searches are not limited to any particular faith or race. Surely we are not so selfish as to think that the inconvenience to us of a few security measures is more important than the lives of innocent people in Paris.
- British antiterror efforts target jihadists and certainly not moderate Muslims, of which I am sure the Council can surely make a distinction, just as the majority of British citizens do.

COUNCIL FURTHER BELIEVES

- While we all naturally oppose fascism, there have been some worrying incidents in regards to Unite Against Fascism. They called mixedrace MEP Steven Woolfe an "oreo". Protests organised by the UAF often result in large scale violence and arrests of UAF members. On the 20th of March 2010, 55 UAF supporters were arrested for, as the police said, provoking violence and acting with extreme violence. On the 30th of August 2010, UAF members actually threw missiles at the police and 14 arrest were made. On the 2nd of June 2013, 58 antifascist demonstrators were arrested.

COUNCIL RESOLVES

- This Council absolutely must support security to protect all British citizens, including moderate Muslims.
- We can not support Unite Against Fascism on February 6th 2016 to protest necessary antiterrorism measures known as the Prevent strategy that would stop a Parislike attack.
- This Council needs to better research the actions of Unite Against Fascism, such as police arrests for inciting violence.

AMENDMENT C

COUNCIL BELIEVES

- The British people in general do not hate British Muslims, but often speak out in their defence on social media.

ANTI-RACISM AND THE REFUGEE CRISIS

- There are Muslims in very influential places in British society including the government, which shows what a tolerant and inclusive country this is.
- The motion claims that Stand Up to Racism are fighting for the rights of Muslims. Islam is a religion not a race. The largest Muslim population in Europe is that in Bosnia, where most people are of pale complexion. Clearly race has nothing to do with Islam, but it's a religion with members of all colours, even in the UK.

COUNCIL FURTHER BELIEVES

- The current circumstances make people nervous for a number of reasons. In every country, there is at least a small element that spreads hate, be that those who resent Muslims or those who pursue religious radicalism, but most of the UK population, despite our amazing diversity is peaceful.
- The British people are not ignorant, but realise that all religions have variation, ranging from the extremist through the moderate to the lapsed. Christianity has both Protestants and Catholics, as well as a number of smaller groups. Likewise Islam has both Sunnis and Shia. Most people are quick to say not all Muslims are terrorists, just as not all Catholics are IRA members.
- There is no mass uprising against Muslims by the British population, but rather Britain is arguably the most tolerant country in the world, as the composition of this Council proves.
- There have been some interesting initiatives on Facebook by Muslims who have posted their sympathy. Such is an effective campaign in ensuring harmony, and has been supported by British citizens of all backgrounds.
- We have a history of societies inviting speakers to Birkbeck. Therefore, I suggest we should as a Student Council support and encourage the Islamic Society to invite a speaker.

COUNCIL RESOLVES

- Acknowledge Islam is a religion not a race
- As Islam is a religion, there is no logic in mentioning here of an antiracism demonstration in London on March 19th such should be another separate issue and motion, and when the matters have been clearly distinguished from one another, we can discuss them.
- We should not be intentionally blurring the concepts of race and religion for dramatic effect but should have an intellectual debate of facts.
- It's not acceptable, without very strong evidence, to imply that the majority of the British population are racist.
- As for a letter condemning the racist rhetoric employed by David Cameron and Home Secretary Theresa May, no evidence is given to such a claim, rather leaving the council open to easily be found libel under the Defamation Act, and therefore this motion needs to be delayed for investigation and the proposer return with evidence to these wild accusations.

ANTI-RACISM AND THE REFUGEE CRISIS

- Encourages that we have a peace march, with people from all backgrounds, including moderate Muslims from our own Birkbeck Islamic Society, where together we can all protest against jihadists that put us all at risks.
- For a moderate Muslim teacher to visit, who from his position of experience can express how jihadism is not acceptable.

AMENDMENT D

COUNCIL BELIEVES

- No evidence is given for the claim in the motion that people are dying in asylum seeker camps in Calais. No figures given to back this up. These camps are not on British soil, but nonetheless Britain has contributed £920 million to help financially, that being more than the rest of the EU combined and more than all the Gulf States. Hence it's absolutely unreasonable to suggest Britain shirks responsibility with the Syrian migrant issue,
- The motion mentions 200,000 migrants came to UK, but actually the figure is half a million.
- Years ago, Britain exercised its optout from the EU's Schengen open borders system, but even if Britain had not, we would have been allocated around 30,000 people to resettle, based on the figures mooted for similarly sized countries, and of which the figure proposed of 20,000 by government is not far off.
- The figure of 600,000 that the motion proposes to house is more than the entire number of recent asylum seekers to have entered the EU. Britain is not morally obligated to house every asylum seeker who enters the EU.
- As for claims 600,000 thousand homes are empty, whatever the figure, homeless British people should be housed. For all this concern for socalled refugees, why is no one worried about the homeless on London streets?
- Suggestion that only 1% of British land is used is absolute nonsense; we are one of the most populated countries in the world.
- It is offensive to demand we create at least ten scholarships for socalled refugees that don't even live here yet at a time when this very Council is claiming working class British people can't afford to study. It's offensive that such doesn't consider refugees from other countries such as Ukraine. Why do we limit our love to people far away, and ignore those here are our feet, the homeless, including brave servicemen?

COUNCIL FURTHER BELIEVES

- There are clearly a range of viewpoints on the question of Syrian migrants, even a debate as to what terminology to use. Strictly speaking, the correct expression is "asylum seeker" until considered with the status of "refugee" by the state a claim has been made to.

ANTI-RACISM AND THE REFUGEE CRISIS

- Though there is ongoing debate as to what the definition is legally of a refugee, with references to the 1951 Convention, but surely absolutely everyone agrees that whoever are refugees do deserve help.
- This Council should not limit concern to one state but also demand we consider taking in victims of the war in Ukraine. They are in a European Union partnership state but disgracefully ignore them and think their suffering is not our problem, but show concern for Syrians from further away.
- These people have passed numerous states to come to Europe, passing Middle Eastern states that shockingly won't help them, despite a shared faith, passing Turkey, Greece, Hungary, Austria, Germany, France and so on. What we should be petitioning for is for the very very wealthy Arab League to do more to help its Muslims brothers in their time of need. Qatar is the richest country in the world. Due to the Arab League refusing to help, these Syrian people have literally walked halfway across the world to come to London.
- Under EU law, people claiming refugee status must apply for asylum in the country in which they first arrive, which would likely be Greece or Italy but they are letting people through their borders..
- The question has been raised in the media as to these migrants only want to move to northwestern Europe, and what is wrong with Turkey? If the conclusion is that Turkey is good enough for asylum seekers, then surely it is not good enough for the Turkish people, and Britain should be taking in the Turkish people as refugees.
- Now we have people in France trying to claim refugee status to move from France to Britain, and the question has to been asked by the media, what does London have that Paris doesn't? France doesn't have war. It doesn't have a natural disaster. These are the reasons one would flee to the safest nearest point of call. Rather, the difference is that Britain has a more generous benefit system.
- The migrants not only from only Syria, Iraq but also other countries including Pakistan and much of North Africa. Many are not fleeing a war, but just poor and realise we have a strong economy with one of the world's strongest welfare systems.
- The UN demands we take in more, and yes to many people this country is a land of opportunity; we have an incredible economy. However, even if a million people move to the UK, and could somehow house them, feed them and our economy not crash and give them the very situation they left, there will still be not millions but billions of poor people and that population grows fast each day as more children are born. It's impossible to take in every poor person from the whole world. More realistic that we petition the UN to do something to fix broken countries. More realistic that the UN remove corrupt leaders so people have live in better conditions. However, the UN features many countries wellknown for human rights abuses, so hardly a great moral anchor in this matter.
- The media has asked what Syrians are doing to stop ISIS. If Britain was invaded as it nearly was in World War 2, it's unlikely that this Council would suggest that the British people take a dinghy to Greenland, then on to Canada, and not being happy there, then go on to New England, and still further, demanding to be in New York. We would fight back, just as was planned for during World War 2. When France was invaded by

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Nazis, the Europe equivalent we could say of the current Daesh situation, the population of France was not distributed around the United Kingdom and Ireland. No, they formed a resistance and fought back. The question has been asked by the media asked, if people can risk their lives swimming and fight police officers, why can't they fight for freedom in Syria. Britain can't fix the world on its own without support of the very people would wish to help. The French were brave resistance fighters of legend. The Polish joined the RAF and were the most determined of pilots as they bravely fought the Nazis. The Norwegians who moved here were not settled but trained up and sent back to fight. They launched the brave attack on the light water factory which stopped the Nazis getting the atomic bomb first, otherwise today we'd be speaking German in this room. It's time for a Syria resistance. Most of these migrants are single men and women who should be volunteering to fight for their state and people; only few should be resettled here. We should be raising a Syrian Free Army to go and fight for their country.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVES

- The homeless in London, including brave servicemen, are not worthless or less important than asylum seekers
- Any scholarship should be open to all and not limited to a group of people. It should be open to working-class people, to the homeless; to any legal citizen of Britain.
- Petition the UN to do something to fix broken countries, to remove corrupt leaders and establish democracy so people have live in better conditions.
- Petition for the countries with human rights abuses to be removed from the UN.
- Petition the government to enlist single asylum seekers into an army unit akin to the French Foreign Legion, or a Syrian Free Army, so that British skills can be shared and our intelligence services deployed as they go and fight for their homeland.

WAR IN SYRIA AND THE PARIS ATTACKS

War in Syria and the Paris attacks

COUNCIL BELIEVES

1. Following the uprisings which swept the region in 2011 for the last four years, there has been a bloody, multi-faceted civil war.
2. More than half of all Syrians are now refugees. Out of a population of 23 million before the war, more than four million fled to neighbouring countries by July of this year, and almost eight million had been displaced within Syria. An estimated 200,000 have made their way to Europe.
3. At the time of writing the United States, France and Russia are the only countries bombing in Syria.
4. In 2013, public pressure on MPs, and the memory of the Iraq war, led to the unprecedented vote in parliament against David Cameron's plan to bomb Syria.
5. The US has been bombing Isis targets for over a year and made no progress. In that time Isis have captured large sections of Iraq and Syria.
6. A series of horrific shootings and suicide bombings saw at least 130 people killed in six sites around the French capital, Paris, on 13/11/15. There has also been attacks in other cities across the world.
7. These attacks were carried out by ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) – who have grown from the conflict in Syria and the destruction of infrastructure, occupation and entrenchment of sectarian division by the West in Iraq.

COUNCIL FURTHER BELIEVES

1. Muslims are not to blame for the actions of ISIS.
2. Isis is a reactionary and counter-revolutionary movement. But it is a product of the destruction wreaked in Iraq by the 2003 invasion and subsequent occupation and of the defeat of the Arab Spring. The ultimate responsibility for its rise therefore lies with the Western imperialist powers and their local clients.
3. More bombing will simply fuel the fire which Isis grows from and kill/ displace millions more innocent civilians. We have already seen this from the airstrikes carried out by France in the past week. However President Francois Hollande promised, "We are going to lead a war which will be pitiless" - thereby disregarding the fact that France has been bombing Syria prior to the Paris attacks.
4. Isis wants a war with the West to justify their position.
5. Following the Paris attacks there has been a racist backlash targeting Muslims and refugees as terrorists across Europe.
6. We must reject the racist offensive, which David Cameron will use to justify his bloodthirsty demand for war and weaken our solidarity with those fleeing from western bombs.

COUNCIL RESOLVES

1. Demand the British government does not use military intervention in Syria and to pull out of other invasions/occupations in the Middle East.
2. Affiliate to the Stop the War Coalition (£50 affiliation fee), and support any Stop the War Coalition protest against intervention in Syria.

WAR IN SYRIA AND THE PARIS ATTACKS

SECRETARY'S NOTE

4. This is an ordinary motion that proposes a policy stance and can be agreed by a simple majority vote of the Council.
5. The motion also proposes an "affiliation" to an external body. Under the procedures of the Regulations on Affiliations (see Note 1 below), this follows Regulation 4.
6. The motion can be amended: in advance, substantive amendments can be submitted by Thursday 26 November at 5pm; manuscript amendments may be accepted on the day at the meeting at the discretion of the chair. All amendments require one proposer and one seconder.
7. Debate on the motion and any amendments is subject to Standing Orders.

AMENDMENT A

COUNCIL BELIEVES

- Phrases such as those implying "Western imperialist powers" are responsible for Daesh are very very concerning about such is that it is exactly the very terminology that jihadist training videos use; the kind of thing Anjem Choudary says. It is outrageous and insensitive, so close to the recent tragedy in Paris, to suggest the West brought such violence on themselves, but rather radical Muslim teachers, may it be stressed, but radical preachers, have been promoting this hate for centuries, and the Iraq war was just the latest excuse for conflict.

COUNCIL RESOLVES

- Any jihadist apologism and related terminology or ideas have no place in the in this democratic assembly.

AMENDMENT B

COUNCIL BELIEVES

- There is no plan to invade Syria. There was talk of such in 2013, but the House of Commons voted was far from unprecedented.

- The Assad government, though involved in horrific human rights abuses that need to be stopped, is not the target of the French or Russian bombing campaign, but even an ally of Russia. Rather, as even this motion admits within Syria's territory and actually probably more so that of Iraq, Daesh has arisen, that being something Assad opposes, as do most people worldwide.

COUNCIL RESOLVES

- This not the best use of students time, considering that people from the governing party as well as opposition are not comfortable with the road to armed conflict, and all seek for some alternative. We do not want to preach to the converted

WAR IN SYRIA AND THE PARIS ATTACKS

- This house does not object to the invasion of Syria because there is no such planned government act

AMENDMENT C

COUNCIL BELIEVES

- There is absolutely no racial motive to enter war; a NATO state was attacked and we have every right to defend ourselves.

COUNCIL FURTHER BELIEVES

- There is no evidence to the claim that David Cameron's motive for war is either racism or religious bigotry.
- There is no evidence to back up claims of a racist backlash across Europe, but rather the very opposite with many people on social media very quick to say not all Muslims are terrorists, just as not all Catholics are IRA members.
- The Cabinet of this government that would lead any potential war is diverse.
- Britain is arguably the most tolerant country in the world, as the composition of this council proves!

COUNCIL RESOLVES

- The motion forward used the phrase ISIS not preceded by "so-called" or instead referred to as Daesh. For all the claim in this motion of discrimination, it's a very serious error and awkward failing that it didn't even manage to use the name many Muslims actively demand is used. This motion must be delayed until the next meeting so that it can be better researched and resubmitted with the correct wording.
- The Council will not leave itself open to easily be found libel under the Defamation Act, by making accusations of racism without evidence, be that against a national leader or any member. This council must never resort to emotive rhetoric, randomly shouting "racist" without evidence to such a claim, but have intellectual analytical debate of facts.
- The time is come for Daesh and its supporters to be eradicated: if we are to write a letter, it should be for something productive such as to demand Saudi Arabia and Qatar first of all to stop funding the Salafists and Wahabists, and secondly to play a larger part in this intervention campaign to bring stability to both Syria and Iraq.
- We should respect the UN allows people the right to selfdetermination, and support the Kurdish people's demand for their own state.

AMENDMENT D

WAR IN SYRIA AND THE PARIS ATTACKS

COUNCIL BELIEVES

- Any peace talks with Daesh would require compromise and how can the Student Council hold the stance that we make a deal with a state that rapes and traffics women?
- There is no question of legality to intervention in Syria while human rights abuses of UN members bring its credibility into doubt, nonetheless, there was a UN Security Council resolution backing intervention.
- This Council thinks all lives, including those of Muslims, are important.
- We can't stand idly by joining Stop The War coalitions while ISIL kills people daily; beheading, raping, cage burning 99% of whom are Muslim. We stopped those in Yugoslavia killing Muslims, and we must stand again. This council, including the LGBTQ+ Officer, wants a stop to be put to Daesh throwing off homosexuals off rooftops. The Woman's Officer objects to women being raped, sold at auctions and treated like animals. We want Muslims to live in freedom as they do in the UK, as they do in Indonesia, as they do now in Bosnia. We can not stand by idly and let Daesh continue raping women. They do matter to us even if they are not here in the room but miles away. We have a moral conscience.

COUNCIL FURTHER BELIEVES

- An armed response would be no Iraq war of 2003; clearly far more is at stake here than the possession of oil this is a struggle against a group that is destabilising the whole Middle East and the wider world with its ethnic cleansing and rape of women we didn't stand by and watch the butchers in Yugoslavia wipe out the Muslims of Bosnia; we cannot afford this to be another Rwanda.
- This government would favour boots on the ground and is waiting for local states to support in such, but rather, as Lord Ashdown drew attention to recently, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states are funding jihadism. Saudi Arabia and Qatar, believing that Syrian President Bashar alAssad would soon fall backed the Daesh rebels fighting him, while Russia came to his defence. Britain is reluctant to invade another country without Arab support due to the Iraq fiasco of the Labour government.
- Fear of retaliation is no reason to hold back from intervention. Would this council have had us refrain from fighting the Nazis for fear they would get angry and let them kill Jews? British extremists' grievance-stirring can bend itself to whatever policy we choose; their violence used to be based on our failure to intervene in Syria. We defeated Hitler and we will find a way to stop Daesh.
- Airstrikes are not a waste but they are working; is hindering Daesh from harming people. Daesh has been losing substantial ground in its Syrian and Iraqi territories. In April, it lost control of the city of Tikrit. In June, it surrendered Kobane, on the SyriaTurkey border. Earlier this month, in news perhaps intentionally obliterated by the terror attacks in Paris, Kurdish forces took the town of Sinjar, closing the main road between Isil's "capital", Raqqa, and its largest city, Mosul. Airstrikes were essential in each of these operations, allowing local troops to take control on the ground. The next stage will probably be an offensive

WAR IN SYRIA AND THE PARIS ATTACKS

in the so-called “Manbij pocket”, Daesh’s last 60-mile stretch of international frontier, cutting off or cutting down the flow of oil, Western jihadi wannabes and Isis terrorist commanders.

- Any bombing is targeted at terrorists found by intelligence, over two very large countries, of which Daesh only does not even control half of either, meaning few people are nearby any bomb explosion. People across the region are fleeing, which means the people are not being driven out by bombing, but rather the unstable governments, yes, the horrid raping, the killing by jihadists that needs to be stopped. They need a stable government.
- Even LibDems said they may vote for RAF air strikes in Syrian/Iraqi territory if they were lawful, enjoyed regional support and were part of a broader plan.

COUNCIL RESOLVES

- This Council can not in good conscience support the join the Stop The War movement, but must support efforts to stop rape and murder of civilians..
- We should be demanding those who go to fight for Daesh cannot return here and put British people, including moderate Muslims, in danger of terrorist attacks.

NOTE 1 – Regulations Governing Affiliations:

1. A student or group of students (including clubs and societies) wishing to affiliate their group (and by extension the SU) or the SU as a whole, makes an application in writing to the Executive Committee;
2. The Executive Committee investigates the proposed affiliation, and specifically investigates:
 - a. Cost and commitment/liability
 - b. The wider benefit to the SU and its members
 - c. Establishes the charitable benefit ‘to further the education’ of Birkbeck students
 - d. Procedures for disaffiliation and any constitutional commitments beyond the current financial year
 - e. Appropriateness
3. An affiliation may be approved by the Trustee Board, on recommendation of the Executive if:
 - a. There are funds to cover the cost of affiliation
 - b. The present work of, or the near future work of the Students’ Union is enhanced by such an affiliation, and
 - c. There is a charitable benefit that can be clearly evidenced and communicated to members and stakeholders
4. Additionally, the Council may by a resolution (with proper notice of motion given), affiliate to or disaffiliate from any affiliation (save that if the affiliation has been approved by Referendum or a disaffiliation is caused by a Referendum, the Council resolution is void)
5. For clubs and societies, the Executive Officer responsible for clubs and societies, shall have delegated authority to approve any necessary affiliation, provided that such an affiliation is required for the work and further the objects of that society, and, there is sufficient budget to pay for the affiliation.
6. Where no budget has been allocated to cover the costs of any affiliation, the matter shall only be resolved by the Trustee Board.
7. Annually, or more frequently, a resolution shall be put to the members at a General Meeting (usually the AGM) listing the current ongoing affiliations and the cost of affiliation. If an affiliation is declined or not ‘renewed’ at the General Meeting, the Council shall make a determination whether to call a Referendum to reverse the issue (or alternatively, member can submit a valid requisition as set down in the Articles for a secret ballot of members).

WAR IN SYRIA AND THE PARIS ATTACKS

8. *A list of affiliations, the cost of affiliation, and the main website/contact details for such affiliations, shall be kept on the website.*

LIBRARY COLLECTION AND PHOTOCOPYING CHARGES

Library Collection and Photocopying Charges

COUNCIL RESOLVES

1. Student Union must pressure the library for a better collection of resources and books - we don't have enough computing books; usually they are all booked out and most are literally decades out of date which is disgraceful in the fast moving industry of computing.
2. Student Union must fight for reduced print and copy charges at the library.

SECRETARY'S NOTE

1. This is an ordinary motion that proposes a policy stance and can be agreed by a simple majority vote of the Council.
2. The motion can be amended: in advance, substantive amendments can be submitted by Thursday 26 November at 5pm; manuscript amendments may be accepted on the day at the meeting at the discretion of the chair. All amendments require one proposer and one seconder.
3. Debate on the motion and any amendments is subject to Standing Orders.

UCL Air Conditioning

COUNCIL RESOLVES

1. Student Union must fight the lack of air-conditioning in UCL rooms where MSc students attend lectures - the sauna like atmosphere is not conducive to concentration required for study for mentally stimulating subjects.

SECRETARY'S NOTE

1. This is an ordinary motion that proposes a policy stance and can be agreed by a simple majority vote of the Council.
2. The motion can be amended: in advance, substantive amendments can be submitted by Thursday 26 November at 5pm; manuscript amendments may be accepted on the day at the meeting at the discretion of the chair. All amendments require one proposer and one seconder.
3. Debate on the motion and any amendments is subject to Standing Orders.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Richard Brinck-Johnsen (second: David Kirkman)

1. Replace "MSc Students" with "All Birkbeck Students"
2. Replace "Student Union must fight" with "To make a formal complaint to the Estates Department."
3. Add resolves: " 2. To recognise that the use of inappropriate teaching facilities owned by UCL and other venues such as Westminster Kingsway is having a detrimental effect on the experience of many Birkbeck Students. The Exec will work with the original proposer of this motion to develop a more detailed policy motion to ensure the Estates Development plan can be held to account by our successors on SU Council and Exec.
4. Add resolves: "3. To present the full policy motion on holding the Estates Department to account to the next meeting of SU council."

BETTER ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL AND MATURE STUDENTS

Better Accommodation options for International and Mature students

COUNCIL RESOLVES

1. The Student Union must push for better accommodation options for international and mature students.

SECRETARY'S NOTE

1. This is an ordinary motion that proposes a policy stance and can be agreed by a simple majority vote of the Council.
2. The motion can be amended: in advance, substantive amendments can be submitted by Thursday 26 November at 5pm; manuscript amendments may be accepted on the day at the meeting at the discretion of the chair. All amendments require one proposer and one seconder.
3. Debate on the motion and any amendments is subject to Standing Orders.

LIFT THE AGE CAP ON TAUGHT MASTERS

Lift the Age Cap on Taught Masters

COUNCIL RESOLVES

1. Student Union representatives to NUS must fight for Masters students of all ages to have access to a student loan for their first Master's degree, in similar style to the government support for Bachelor's students.
2. This is a worthy taxpayers expense - a person from any background can be intelligent, determined and responsible, and hence on receipt of such education, a real asset to the country.

SECRETARY'S NOTE

1. This is an ordinary motion that proposes a policy stance and can be agreed by a simple majority vote of the Council.
2. The motion can be amended: in advance, substantive amendments can be submitted by Thursday 26 November at 5pm; manuscript amendments may be accepted on the day at the meeting at the discretion of the chair. All amendments require one proposer and one seconder.
3. Debate on the motion and any amendments is subject to Standing Orders.

ANTI-RACISM AND ANTI-FASCISM OFFICER TO INCLUDE ANTI-ANARCHISM

Anti-racism and Anti-fascism Officer to include Anti-anarchism

COUNCIL RESOLVES

1. Anti-fascism/Anti-racism Officer title targets one aspect of political extremism but not all - it should be rephrased to also include anti-anarchism.

SECRETARY'S NOTE

1. This is an ordinary motion that proposes a policy stance and can be agreed by a simple majority vote of the Council.
2. The motion, if passed, would put a mandate down to bring to the next meeting a motion to amend the rules concerning the name of the Anti-racism and Anti-fascism Officer, and this motion would require a two-thirds majority vote.
3. The motion can be amended: in advance, substantive amendments can be submitted by Thursday 26 November at 5pm (please note that no rule changes can be brought at the amendments stage on this motion); manuscript amendments may be accepted on the day at the meeting at the discretion of the chair. All amendments require one proposer and one seconder.
4. Debate on the motion and any amendments is subject to Standing Orders.

SOLAR PANELS TO FUND A BIRKBECK SU SCHOLARSHIP

Solar panels to fund a Birkbeck SU scholarship

COUNCIL RESOLVES

1. Investigate the feasibility of utilising roof space for solar panels - any extra money made can go towards a scholarship. The Birkbeck SU scholarship..

SECRETARY'S NOTE

1. This is an ordinary motion that proposes a policy stance and can be agreed by a simple majority vote of the Council.
2. The motion can be amended: in advance, substantive amendments can be submitted by Thursday 26 November at 5pm; manuscript amendments may be accepted on the day at the meeting at the discretion of the chair. All amendments require one proposer and one seconder.
3. Debate on the motion and any amendments is subject to Standing Orders.

Improving the Careers Service

COUNCIL RESOLVES

1. This Council calls for an improvement to good quality careers advice with a view to maximising employment opportunities for graduates and current college members.

SECRETARY'S NOTE

1. This is an ordinary motion that proposes a policy stance and can be agreed by a simple majority vote of the Council.
2. The motion can be amended: in advance, substantive amendments can be submitted by Thursday 26 November at 5pm; manuscript amendments may be accepted on the day at the meeting at the discretion of the chair. All amendments require one proposer and one seconder.
3. Debate on the motion and any amendments is subject to Standing Orders.

Inclusive politics

COUNCIL RESOLVES

1. While societies specific to a political party such as the Birkbeck Conservatives or Birkbeck Labour may support a party line neither other student societies the liberation groups the Student Council nor the Student Union executive committee should ever show a bias.
2. For the sake of democracy and to allow students to make an informed decision we should tolerate and be inclusive of all mainstream political parties whether we agree with them or not that being those accepted by the BBC TV debates for the general election in 2015 e.g. those partaking in the debate in England, of which London is a city are: LibDems, Tories, Labour, UKIP and Greens.

SECRETARY'S NOTE

1. This is an ordinary motion that proposes a policy stance and can be agreed by a simple majority vote of the Council.
2. The motion can be amended: in advance, substantive amendments can be submitted by Thursday 26 November at 5pm; manuscript amendments may be accepted on the day at the meeting at the discretion of the chair. All amendments require one proposer and one seconder.
3. Debate on the motion and any amendments is subject to Standing Orders.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Richard Brinck-Johnsen (second: Hana Faber)

1. Remove "the liberation groups" from Council Resolves 1 – the author of this motion does not define into any of the liberation groups and as officers representing them we are deeply unhappy with the current wording of this motion as it threatens our campaigns' autonomy as recognised by the NUS.
2. Add Resolves "3. Whilst recognising that the roles of Student Union should allow the full spectrum of political opinions to be recognised. When not speaking on behalf of or on matters relating to the Students' Union, Officers are entitled to their own individual views in external environments such as personal social media accounts.

Alcohol at events

COUNCIL RESOLVES

1. Student Union should allow reasonable drinking of alcohol at events, such as conferences on campus, and reasonable expenditure by societies.

SECRETARY'S NOTE

1. This is an ordinary motion that proposes a policy stance and can be agreed by a simple majority vote of the Council.
2. The motion can be amended: in advance, substantive amendments can be submitted by Thursday 26 November at 5pm; manuscript amendments may be accepted on the day at the meeting at the discretion of the chair. All amendments require one proposer and one seconder.
3. Debate on the motion and any amendments is subject to Standing Orders.

EU Referendum

COUNCIL BELIEVES

1. A referendum is coming up on the EU where people are permitted by the government to vote for and against.

COUNCIL RESOLVES

1. While we may have strong viewpoints in both the referendum on Scotland and that on the EU the potential of succession from a union in both are legal valid stances and we should show neither in speech or printing any bias or pressure students towards one side but tolerate speakers both for and against.

SECRETARY'S NOTE

1. This is an ordinary motion that proposes a policy stance and can be agreed by a simple majority vote of the Council.
2. The motion can be amended: in advance, substantive amendments can be submitted by Thursday 26 November at 5pm; manuscript amendments may be accepted on the day at the meeting at the discretion of the chair. All amendments require one proposer and one seconder.
3. Debate on the motion and any amendments is subject to Standing Orders.
4. It should be noted that we have sought guidance from the Charity Commission on the scope of our charitable activity – both in the run-up to the proposed referendum and during the restricted period under the 2001 Act.

International students

COUNCIL RESOLVES

1. Student Union to fund and support an International Students Convention.
2. The International Students Society should be chaired by the International Students Officer.

SECRETARY'S NOTE

1. This is an ordinary motion that proposes a policy stance and can be agreed by a simple majority vote of the Council.
2. The motion can be amended: in advance, substantive amendments can be submitted by Thursday 26 November at 5pm; manuscript amendments may be accepted on the day at the meeting at the discretion of the chair. All amendments require one proposer and one seconder.
3. Debate on the motion and any amendments is subject to Standing Orders.

Mature students

COUNCIL RESOLVES

1. Student Union to fund and support an Mature Students Convention.
2. By end of 2016 prior to summer holiday a Mature Students Society should have been launched chaired by the Mature Students Officer.

SECRETARY'S NOTE

1. This is an ordinary motion that proposes a policy stance and can be agreed by a simple majority vote of the Council.
2. The motion can be amended: in advance, substantive amendments can be submitted by Thursday 26 November at 5pm; manuscript amendments may be accepted on the day at the meeting at the discretion of the chair. All amendments require one proposer and one seconder.
3. Debate on the motion and any amendments is subject to Standing Orders.

AMENDMENT

Proposed by Richard Brinck-Johnsen (second: David Kirkman)

1. Amend council resolves 1 to "Students Union to collaborate with the new Mature Students Officer to see if there is feasibility and funding available for a Mature Students Convention."
2. Add resolves: "3. The Exec shall delegate the former Mature Students Officer, now one of the sabbatical trustees, to work alongside their successor to ensure that resolves 1 and 2 are both looked at and to introduce them to the work of the NUS Mature and Part Time Students Campaign."

Guidance Notes

AMENDMENTS

1. A “substantive” amendment is one which contradicts or substantially changes the proposed motion, whilst still being within the topic under discussion.
2. A “manuscript” amendment is one which seeks to add additional information or sculpt policy, without changing the scope of the original motion.
3. Stand alone “delete” amendments can be proposed at the meeting, provided that their purpose is not academic or vexatious (where either opposing the motion as read is better)
4. Motions and amendments to motion are subject to the Parts Procedure, where if agreed by the Council under Standing Orders, the motion/amendment is broken up in to smaller ‘parts’, debated separately, and voted on.
5. Any substantive amendments must be emailed to council@birkbeckunion.org not later than close of business on Thursday 26 November 2015.

SECRETARY’S NOTE

1. Pursuant to the Standing Orders, and in line with the Memorandum of Association, the motions submitted have been considered in terms of our own policies and procedures, including our Staff Protocol and the bye-laws relating to the Council.
2. The motions have been considered in line with the charitable objects of the Union and in line with the current guidance from the Charity Commission. It should be noted that it is never clear cut whether something is “charitable” or not, it is though required that the trustees consider all actions of the Union and satisfy themselves through an appropriate policy that actions and work is charitable.
3. There is noting that stands out as being incompatible with the Human Rights Act 1998.

NO PLATFORM: JOHN MCDONNELL

No Platform: John McDonnell

EMERGENCY MOTION

THE COUNCIL BELIEVES

We are deeply disturbed by reports that former Birkbeck MA student and current Shadow Cabinet member John McDonnell spoke of killing those opposed to the IRA. This Council can never support terrorism. We are horrified by what happened in Paris and would wish such on no one. Several students who themselves or their close family had experience of the troubles in Ireland came to us in distress. Even in London, we were affected by bombings.

THE COUNCIL RESOLVES

We demand a No Platform for John McDonnell is put into effect for his 'dangerous' and 'offensive' views, 'inciting terrorism' and the like.

SECRETARY'S NOTE

The motion was received late and cannot be placed on the agenda, but can lay on the table for a future meeting, or could be delegated by procedural motion to another group or committee.

By order of the Council



24 November 2015 – Secretary to Council

Updated 30 November 2015

R J Park