



Cambridge University Students' Union  
17 Mill Lane  
Cambridge  
CB2 1RX

National Union of Students  
275 Gray's Inn Road  
London  
WC1X 8QB  
United Kingdom

Tuesday 17th May 2016

**Subject: Open Letter to the National Union of Students (NUS) requesting urgent next steps to stem anti-Semitism in student movement**

Dear National Union of Students,

In my capacity as the President 2015-16 for Cambridge University Students' Union (CUSU), I am writing on behalf of Cambridge students, and the CUSU Sabbatical Officer Team 2015-16. We would like to express the grave concerns of students at the University of Cambridge with regards to what have been deemed examples of anti-Semitism within the National Union of Students.

At a meeting of the CUSU Council on May the 2nd, 2016, student representatives from across the Collegiate University passed policy to hold a referendum on CUSU's affiliation to NUS. CUSU Council is attended by the elected student representatives of the 31 Cambridge Colleges and therefore provides an accurate reflection of the views and opinions of the 22,000 students we represent. As the motion states, students have asked for CUSU to seriously reconsider its relationship to NUS, this is in light of the recent change in national leadership and the recurrent reports by Jewish students of NUS's inability to effectively uproot a culture of anti-Semitism within the student movement.

To be absolutely clear, CUSU condemns anti-Semitism and racism in all its forms and expressly asks NUS to do more to protect the rightful place of Jewish students within the student movement. CUSU demands NUS set out clear actions and next steps to fully ensure reports of anti-Semitism within the organisation are dealt with.

Our concerns about anti-Semitism within NUS are intensified by the fact that in a recent interview with the student media, Richard Brooks, NUS Vice-President (Union Development), confirmed that NUS subscribes to the European Forum of Anti-Semitism's definition of the term, which states in part that anti-Semitism is: "making mendacious, dehumanising, demonising, or stereotypical allegations about Jews as such or the power of Jews as collective — such as, especially but not exclusively, the myth about a world Jewish conspiracy or of Jews controlling the media, economy, government or other societal institutions." On the basis of NUS subscribing to such a definition, it is regrettable

that CUSU must express clear concern that President-elect Malia Bouattia has received widespread coverage for several statements considered unacceptable by Jewish students.

Jewish students here at Cambridge have vigorously argued that, for the NUS President-elect to speak, for example, of a Zionist global media conspiracy, she has endorsed a long-standing anti-Semitic trope that has been used to undermine and discredit the oppression of Jewish people. CUSU vehemently stands in solidarity with Jewish students in their efforts to fight against anti-Semitism. Combatting anti-Semitism must be an ongoing fight for NUS; this is regardless of CUSU's affiliation to the National Union of Students.

At CUSU, we are uncomfortable with the idea that we should encourage Jewish students to stand as delegates or attend NUS Conference in order to receive equal representation and treatment. We are further concerned that Jewish representation is no longer guaranteed on the NUS ARAF Committee.

CUSU upholds a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of racism, and it is incumbent upon the NUS President-elect, the elected representative of seven million students, to disavow any rhetoric, actions or behaviors that can be seen to stigmatise a particular minority group. CUSU would therefore ask for an urgent and fully transparent outline of the steps that Ms. Bouattia will take as President of NUS to address anti-Semitism within the student movement, and ensure an improvement in the NUS's relationship with Jewish students.

NUS claims to be a leading exemplar of diversity and equality,' thus we believe it is right for the students of Cambridge University to receive a full and comprehensive response to this open letter at the earliest convenience.

On behalf of the students of the University of Cambridge, we look forward to receiving your reply.

Yours sincerely,  
The CUSU Sabbatical Officer Team 2015-16

Priscilla Mensah	Robert Cashman	Jemma Stewart	Poppy Ellis Logan	Helena Blair	Charlotte Chorley
<b>President</b>	<b>Education Officer</b>	<b>Coordinator</b>	<b>Welfare &amp; Rights Officer</b>	<b>Access &amp; Funding Officer</b>	<b>Women's Officer</b>