

UNION POLICY (GENERAL MEETING – (11.5.11))

IN SOLIDARITY WITH FREEDOM IN THE MIDDLE EAST & NORTH AFRICA

THIS UNION NOTES

1. That millions of people in North Africa and Middle East representing vast sections of civil society, including a variety of political factions, trade unionists, minorities, women, and in particular students and young people (whose contribution has led to some labeling the movement as 'shababiyya' or youth-inspired) have been protesting against the dictatorial regime of Hosni Mubarak, Ben Ali, Qaddafi and Bashar Al Assad and economic, social and political injustice.
2. The regimes during the uprising attempted to utilise various mechanisms of violence to intimidate the protestors.
3. That in spite of the fact that some dictators have left, their regimes still remain in power attempting to intimidate and undermine the demands of the revolution.
4. That the protests in Egypt, Syria, Libya have been inspired by the 'Jasmine Revolution' by the people of Tunisia, which managed to bring down the hated regime of the authoritarian Ben Ali.
5. That many of North African and Middle Eastern repressive regimes (which still remains until today) has received massive support, including military aid, from the USA, the UK, their allies and their proxies.
6. That Egypt under Mubarak's regime, Libya under Qaddafi, Syria under Al Assad, Tunisia under Ben Ali have become major violators of basic human rights.
7. That, inspired by events in Tunisia and Egypt, popular protests against authoritarian regimes have sprung up across the region, most notably in Libya, Syria, Bahrain, Yemen, Jordan and Algeria.

THIS UNION BELIEVES

1. That there can be no real beneficial change until the authoritarian dictatorships and their entire regime (and its apparatus) is removed.
2. That everyone has the right to full freedom of assembly, communication and other basic human rights.
3. That it is up to the people to decide the future of their country, and interference by the USA, UK, Israel, their allies and their proxies should be opposed and resisted. British foreign policy has, for political gain, compromised democracy in the region, and this is not acceptable.
4. That, as a result of active acquiescence, our government (as well as previous administrations) bears responsibility for the continued existence of these regimes and all their crimes, thus ensuring the regimes longevity.
5. Public expressions of solidarity in the UK can help to strengthen, legitimise, and give confidence to those involved in the unfolding events, whilst also putting pressure on our own government to use its ties with these regimes to meet the peaceful demands of their people.

THIS UNION RESOLVES

1. To publish a statement supporting the protestors' demands for an end to the rule of the repressive regimes, and for the establishment of a genuine democracy.
2. To rename 'Meeting Room 1' in the Steve Biko Building to 'Khaled Said', whose murder by the regime is an event that is widely considered to be an inspiration for Egypt's ongoing revolution and to place a plaque depicting the story of Khaled Said and how he inspired the Egyptian Revolution outside the room renamed after him.
3. To invite a speaker to address UMSU on the ongoing movement in Egypt, Syria and North Africa, the violations of Human Rights, and the UK's involvement with the Mubarak regime.

4. To demand that the University of Manchester support any Egyptian, Tunisian, Libyan and Syrian students studying at the University in case they lose their sponsorship as a result of the events in Egypt, Tunisia and Libya.
5. To support the unfolding movements for democratisation in the Middle East and North Africa region.
6. To publicise, in the form of a news article in a prominent position in 'The Mancunion' and the UMSU website, the stories of UoM students (from Egypt, Libya, Syria and Tunisia) who have been directly impacted by these popular uprisings.