



## UNION POLICY (GENERAL MEETING – (20.10.10)

### PEACE THROUGH EDUCATION

#### THIS UNION NOTES

1. Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that “everyone has the right to education.
2. Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states, “Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.”
3. The policy passed at the UMSU General Meeting on November 14<sup>th</sup> 2007 entitled ‘Palestine and Right to Education’ which twinned UMSU with the Student Union of Al Najah National University, Nablus.
4. Palestinian students are regularly disrupted on their way to university by Israeli checkpoints.
5. Palestinians have placed huge importance on education. According to the Palestinian Right to Education campaign there is a 98.2% literacy rate between 15-24 year olds and a 91.1% total adult literacy, the highest in the region.
6. Students in Palestine are the next generation and will be instrumental in bringing about Peace in Palestine as their future relies on it. Ismat, an economics student at Berziet University said: “Of course me and my fellow students want peace... our future relies on it...what would I do with a degree after four years of studying if we never get peace”.  
*<http://www.actionpalestine.org/wp/index.php/10/about-one-voice/>*
7. Education is one of the few outlets which Palestinians have been able to use to express their statehood and express their opinions.
8. Tension over the conflict has on occasions spilled over into campus in a way that is detrimental to student welfare.
9. Societies that promote education and mutual understanding about the situation in the Middle East strive to foster better relations and ease tensions between students.

#### THIS UNION BELIEVES

1. That from the motion on 14/11/07 entitled PEACE THROUGH EDUCATION, everyone has the right to education and we at UMSU should work to help this right be realised in areas where education is being infringed upon.
2. That UMSU has a responsibility to use its links with Al-Najah to promote progression of peace and tolerance.
3. Supporting the right to education for Palestinians is in itself a step towards peace. Thus, twinning with Palestinian Universities helps break down the isolation being put on Palestinian students (isolation which is imposed on all Palestinians). This means it empowers a layer of people who have the best interests for the future of peace in the region.
4. Attempts to stop solidarity campaigns with Palestinian students and undermine already existing links with Palestinian students and universities are no different than the isolation that is imposed on them from the Occupation. Thus they are only exacerbating the problem and these attempts should be opposed.
5. That education is the key to gaining a full and proper understanding of the very complex situation in the Middle East and that education and empowerment of young people is the best hope for a peaceful solution.
6. That UMSU should be a safe and welcoming space for all its members and that members should feel comfortable using Union facilities and Union buildings.

7. It is vital to protect the physical and emotional safety of all students at the University of Manchester within the framework of constructive dialogue and debate.

### **THIS UNION RESOLVES**

1. To reaffirm and continue to strengthen our commitment to the twinning with An-Najah University.
2. To continue to allow for a fortnightly article from An-Najah University students, which will be sent to the General Secretary from the official An-Najah Students' Union email address, to be printed in the Mancunian, and that the Union foster a more interactive relationship between our Unions through the hosting of at least 3 video weblinks per academic year and at least 2 letter-writing events to students at An-Najah.
3. That during Right to Education Week, the Union will encourage societies to collaborate and campaign for the specific academic needs of students at An-Najah as requested through the suggested interactive events.
4. That in order to raise awareness amongst students of this policy and the issues surrounding the denial of educational rights to Palestinians, the Union will promote and facilitate a speaking tour of students from Palestine on our campus.
5. To move the twinning plaque to a more prominent position in the Union foyer and to dedicate a space beside it to at least one piece of Palestinian students' artwork.
6. That the Union will condemn Israeli violations of Palestinian human rights, particularly those that deny students free access to their education, and to publicly denounce such acts if and when they occur.
7. To ensure the Union remains a safe space for students of all backgrounds and views, within this framework of constructive dialogue and debate.
8. To support and work alongside all societies that promote dialogue, respect and mutual understanding between students and to empower these societies to host informative events such as the ones discussed in point 2 and 3.