

## **EM 19 – 1: Brunei Sharia Law Urgent Days of Action**

Proposed by IT Blanchardstown SU / TU Dublin SU

This requires two-thirds majority to pass

### **Congress Notes**

That students have been a fundamental instrument and key contributor of driving the queer rights movement historically and that human right issues are tackled head on by students with power, vigor and enthusiasm.

### **Congress Notes With Alarm**

That Brunei is a country in Asia, that is governed by Sharia Law. As of from this week a law took effect whereby anyone engaging in queer intercourse or adultery, would serve a sentence of death by stoning. This is not acceptable and a disgusting attack on human rights.

### **Congress Mandates**

That USI officer-board leads a day of action, that will see students mobilized to show solidarity with those affected in Brunei.

### **Congress Further Mandates**

That USI hosts a further day of action with letter drives calling the government to condemn and act as a lobbying power towards this to take a no tolerance stance on horrific, bigoted language.

## **EM 19 – 2: Support for Workers in Ballina Breweries - Coca-Cola**

Proposed by USI VP for Campaigns

This requires two-thirds majority to pass

### **Congress Notes:**

SIPTU represents the majority of core production workers in the Coca Cola Company plant in Ballina Beverages, County Mayo. Since October 2014, they have been seeking union recognition for the purposes of collective bargaining. They have two Labour Court recommendations that state that the company should recognise SIPTU for those employees in membership of the Union. The company has shut down discussion on the Labour Court recommendations.

### **Congress notes with concern:**

The company's human rights policy states *'where employees are represented by a legally recognised union, we are committed to establishing a constructive dialogue with their freely chosen representatives. The company is committed to bargaining in good faith with such representatives.'* The company are clearly in breach of their own human rights policy by failing to engage in collective bargaining with SIPTU and its members.

### **Congress also notes:**

Young people are the main target market for Coca Cola products and have great weight in this campaign.

### **Congress further notes:**

The National Union of Students UK (NUS UK) wrote to Mr James Quincey, President and CEO of The Coca Cola Company, on the 12th March 2019, raising their concerns about the company's violation of their own human rights policy in relation to workers rights. Mr Brent Wilson, The Coca Cola Company Global Head of Workplace Rights, wrote back to the NUS on the 15th March 2019 offering to meet with the NUS on their concerns.

### **Congress Mandates:**

USI officerboard to write a letter of correspondence to Mr Quincey in support of the SIPTU members in Ballina and raise their concerns over this breach of the human rights of Coca Cola workers in Ballina Beverages.

### **Congress also mandates:**

USI officerboard to support SIPTU in their #TasteZeroRights campaign.

## **EM 19 – 3: USI Strategy Paper on the British Exit from the European Union**

Motion proposed by the VP for Academic Affairs

### **Congress notes**

That the United Kingdom voted to leave the European Union on 23 June 2016, but that voters in the North rejected Brexit in the referendum.

### **Congress further notes**

Previous USI mandates opposing Brexit, to support the efforts of NUS-USI in fighting the negative consequences of Brexit, and the previously stated support of USI to the NUS-USI call for a 'People's Vote'.

### **Congress notes with deep concern**

The political deadlock in the UK Parliament on the negotiated Withdrawal Agreement, which would prevent a hard border on the island of Ireland through the inclusion of the backstop, and the now looming prospect of a no deal Brexit.

### **Congress recognises**

That USI must now seriously increase its lobby and campaigning activity on the implications of Brexit for students across the island, and work more proactively with NUS-USI to protect peace and stability on the island, the rights enshrined under the Good Friday Agreement, and the right of access of all to education.

### **Congress therefore adopts**

The *USI Strategy Paper on the British Exit from the European Union*.

### **Congress also mandates**

That this Strategy is reviewed and considered at each National Council, as required.

## **EM 19 – 4: Decolonising Education**

Proposed by QUB Students' Union

### **Congress notes:**

That a student-led occupation started on 12 March 2019 surrounding anti-racism & decolonization in Goldsmiths University. This ongoing occupation's demands from the university is grounded in the ethos of decolonizing education as the core of anti-racist work in tertiary/third-level institutions.

The #GoldOccupy movement has encouraged actions of solidarity from across the UK & Northern Ireland.

That USI and NUS UK work in partnership through the Trilateral Agreement and that the student movement across the world has a proud history of coming together in solidarity actions.

Student-led 'Decolonise education' campaigns have emerged across the UK since 2015's '*Why is My Curriculum White?*' And '*Rhodes Must Fall*' campaigns, and connect to a rich history of student radicalism.

Deep inequalities persist in education for students of colour, including-but-not-limited-to the attainment gap – these are exacerbated by the scrapping of the Education Maintenance Allowance and Maintenance Grants.

The BAME Attainment Gap is a national crisis, with BAME students 20% less likely to achieve a first or upper second-class degree compared to their white counterparts, despite having been admitted into university with the same A-level grades.

According to NUS liberate the curriculum research 34% of BAME students feel unable to bring their perspectives as students of colour, to their lectures/seminars.

There is a lack of sufficient research, across the island of Ireland, into the issues resulting in the BAME Attainment Gap and how it affects BAME students of intersectional identities and liberation groups (i.e. Women, LGBTQ, Disabled).

University staff employed are not representative of the students that they teach or the national population regarding race and this is also a prevalent issue amongst university senior management.

BAME students are being severely disadvantaged because they are more likely to leave university unable to secure jobs and twice as unlikely to make use of their degree.

A truly liberated and antiracist education system must include racial justice for students, staff and workers within an institution.

University administration are vested in the racist and xenophobic climate of wider society, and embrace the marketisation of higher education to reduce their responsibilities towards workers.

Decolonising education means democratise – transformative change will not happen through seat-at-the-table politics, but by leveraging student-worker-community power

against institutions, to wrest control over them from the hands of overpaid management and corporate interests.

A 'movement-based' approach, organising both in and outside the confines of SUs, and rooted in local communities, should be taken to build a democratic, dynamic movement of truly decolonising our curriculum and institution.

### **Congress Further Believes:**

Decolonise campaigns must, at core, confront the processes of marketisation, corporatisation and securitisation of education that have shut down universities as spaces to organise for radical change – not narrowly consider matters of curriculum and/or faculty diversity.

'Decolonising education' must necessarily be connected to-

- The demand for free education;
- The imposition of visa monitoring on institutions;
- The exclusion and gentrification of working class communities adjacent to many universities;
- The managerialism in the university, and shutting down of internal democracy
- Links between institutions and the arms trade/militarisation abroad;
- Ending Direct Provision.

We should seek where possible to connect with education movements for radical change in the global south.

Many local campaigns across the UK, led primarily by sabbatical officers and guided by NUS UK, have been co-opted by universities and re-routed into diversity initiatives, or incrementalist reformism. The aim of these campaigns should be transformative, not merely replacing one set of bourgeois intellectuals with another of a different hue.

Issues of 'race' inequality cannot be divorced from the other pressures affecting institutions and education on a national scale.

Addressing 'race' inequality goes hand-in-hand with campaigns for free education and the democratising our education - not band-wagging on regressive government reforms because we're promised crumbs.

### **Congress mandates:**

The President, Vice-President Equality & Citizenship, Vice-President Academic Affairs to work on investigating issues surrounding the attainment gap in Ireland.

### **Congress also mandates**

USI Officer Board to work on the ethos of this policy.

### **Congress reaffirms**

USI's stance on calling for free education, and that the democratising education is central to ensuring education is accessible for all.

### **Congress also reaffirms**

USI's solidarity with the Goldsmiths Anti-Racism Occupation.

## **EM 19 – 5: Solidarity with School students - take action on climate change**

Proposed by Maynooth Students' Union

This requires two-thirds majority to pass

### **Congress notes with concern:**

A recent report issued by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), says the planet will reach the crucial threshold of 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels by as early as 2030, precipitating the risk of extreme drought, wildfires, floods and food shortages for hundreds of millions of people.

A report published last year by Climate Action Network showed that Ireland rank second worst in Europe for tackling climate change. According to this report, Ireland is set to miss it's 2020 climate & renewable energy targets. Furthermore, Ireland is already off track to meet it's 2030 emissions target.

This trend extends to many other countries, which means we are set for a 3°C increase, put this is leaning more towards 4°C, which means the struggle to exist will become impossible for millions of people. Meanwhile, just 90 companies are responsible for 63% of all global emissions - it is these companies drive for profits which enables such environmental destruction.

### **Congress further notes:**

Millions of school students all over the world took the lead on an international climate strike on March 15th in response to the lack of action taken by governments on this existential issue.

**Congress recognises:** Strike action is a necessary step to take in order to put sufficient pressure on our government and, more importantly, play an important role in building a global movement for the radical change needed to avert climate death.

**Congress Mandates:** USI to join in practical solidarity and take action on all global strike days called by secondary students in the future.