Sample Twinning Motion

This motion is based upon the LSE Students’ Union “Twinning with the Islamic University of Gaza” motion, which was in turn based on the Right to Education Sample Twinning Motion.

It is important to adapt this motion according to the political context of your students’ union. You also need to choose a particular university in Palestine to twin with and condense the points that are not as relevant to this university (for example, if you are planning to twin with Bethlehem University you can condense the points about the siege in Gaza). The sections in square brackets need to be adapted to your university.

Proposer

Seconder

Union [Notes]:

1. That Israel’s separation, isolation and ghettoization\(^i\) of Palestinian areas by the illegal wall\(^ii\) inside the West Bank, around 700 military roadblocks and checkpoints (an increase of 63.3% since 2005), frequent closures of cities, prolonged curfews, and prison-like restrictions on the movement of all Palestinians, prevent thousands of students and teachers from reaching their schools and universities.\(^iii\)

2. That National Union of Students policy is to “encourage Students’ Unions to twin with Palestinian Universities” because the “occupation severely disrupts Palestinian students’ access to education”.\(^iv\)

3. That Israel is maintaining a blockade on Gaza and that Israel has been reducing the amount of humanitarian aid trucks allowed in over the past year, it has maintained a ban on construction materials which has meant that reconstruction since the bombing (when 6000 homes were destroyed) has been impossible, public infrastructure such as water, health and electricity is in a poor state of repair due to the bombings and the blockade and this has resulted in a poor standard of living and substantial health problems for the Gazan population.\(^v\)

4. That 1,419 Palestinians were killed during the Israeli military offensive on the Gaza Strip. This number includes 1,167 non-combatants (82.2%) and 252 resistance fighters (17.8%)\(^vi\). The civilian victims include 352 children (22.4 % of the total number of victims)\(^vi\).

5. That during the attack on Gaza Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) used White Phosphorous and flechette shells against densely populated civilian areas\(^vii\), including educational facilities. For example, on 17 January 2009, the UNRWA school in Beit Lahiya was attacked with conventional
and white phosphorous shells. At the time of the attack the school was being used as a shelter for displaced persons. Mohammed (aged 4) and Bilal (5) were killed in the attack. ix

6. That at least 150 of the 384 public schools in the Gaza Strip were attacked, affecting approximately 250,000 students. 46 private schools and kindergartens were damaged as a result of Israeli attacks. Most universities and higher educational institutions in the Gaza Strip were damaged during the latest offensive, as a result of either direct or indirect attack. x

7. That on Sunday 28 December 2009, Israeli warplanes bombed the Islamic University xi, inflicting heavy damages on the university’s buildings and facilities. Damage to the university is estimated to be US$15 million. xii

8. That during a four-day military incursion into the Gaza Strip in late February 2009 Israeli forces killed more than 100 Palestinians, about half of whom were civilians not involved in fighting, including some 25 children. Among the victims were 16-year-old Jackline Abu Shbak and her 15-year-old brother Iyad. They were both shot dead with a single bullet to the head in front of their mother and younger siblings, in their home north of Gaza City on 29 February. xiii

9. That Amnesty International notes that across the Occupied “Palestinian territories” violence from Israeli Settlers, reports of torture and housing demolitions all increased over the course of 2009. xiv

10. That each year, hundreds of Palestinian children from the Occupied “Palestinian Territories” are arrested, interrogated, and imprisoned by IOF and that some 300 children are currently held in Israeli prisons and detention centers. xv

11. That Al Quds University in Jerusalem is now surrounded by an 8-meter high concrete wall, which cuts the University off from 36% of its students. xvi

12. That there are 630 checkpoints and roadblocks in the West Bank xvii. These restrict freedom of movement for students to reach classes, with 80% of students reporting delays and difficulties reaching classes xviii.

13. That Israel is preventing 625 students from leaving Gaza to pursue higher education xix.

14. That since 2000 students from Gaza have been barred from reaching the 8 Palestinian universities in the West Bank, despite the universities in Gaza lacking many degree programmes. xx Gazans that pursue their right to education in the West Bank are liable to be forcibly transferred back to Gaza, even when the Israeli state does not have security concerns about the individual xxi.

15. That Hebron University and the Palestine Polytechnic University in Hebron were closed down by Israeli military order for much of 2003; and that the students of Hebron had to physically break down the gates to their universities, in defiance of the Israeli Army, to reconvene classes and demand their right to an education. xli

16. That Birzeit University has been closed down by Israeli military order 15 times in its history; and that all the Palestinian universities and the majority of schools, including kindergartens, were closed down by military order between the years 1987-1992. xliii

17. That 2 presidents of Birzeit University Student Council were imprisoned in 2004 and 4 out of the total 11 members of the Student Council were imprisoned in the same year; and that there are currently 87 students from Birzeit University held in Israeli prisons and detention centers, 47 of whom have not been found guilty of any charge. xliv
18. That from 28/9/2000 to 3/4/2005, 707 students and teachers were killed, 1065 were detained and 4933 were injured by IOF.\textsuperscript{xxv}

Union [Believes]:

1. That the right to education is a fundamental human right and basic to human freedom, as declared in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), which states that “Everyone has the right to education”, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966),\textsuperscript{xxvi} which recognizes that “Education is both a human right in itself and an indispensable means of realizing other human rights.”
2. That the obstruction and attacks on Palestinian education in the West Bank and Gaza Strip by the illegal Israeli occupation not only violates the human rights of individuals, but are an attack on the development of Palestinian society as a whole.
3. If peace is sought, then freedom, justice and education are necessary.
4. It is the responsibility of governments, civil society organizations and ordinary people to defend the universal right to education and to demand its realization.
5. That the illegal Israeli blockade on educational resources in Gaza is an unjustified infringement on the Palestinian right to education and this would be alleviated if UK universities allowed access to Palestinian Universities to their electronic journal subscriptions.

Union [Resolves]:

1. To twin this union with the [Palestinian University’s SU] to show solidarity with the students.
2. To mandate the [General Secretary/Student President] to form a Twinning Taskforce to strengthen links with the [Palestinian University] and advance the right to education campaign.
3. To lobby the [your university] to twin with the [Palestinian University].
4. To affiliate to the Right to Education Campaign at Birzeit University as a public show of solidarity and support to all Palestinian students and teachers who are struggling to live, work and study under the illegal Israeli occupation.
5. To raise awareness within this union and beyond to local and national constituencies about the issues facing Palestinian education under military occupation.
6. To support the Right to Education Campaign’s calls for international action against Israeli violations of the human right to education in the occupied Palestinian territory.
7. To mandate the Education and Welfare Officer [or other sabbatical education officer] to write a letter to the [your university]’s administration asking for access for Palestinian Universities to the online journal subscriptions and to coordinate with the Twinning Taskforce to advance this campaign.
8. To oppose Israel’s illegal military occupation and its attacks on Palestinian education and to lobby the elected representatives of our own government to pressure the government of Israel to adhere to its legal obligations to end attacks on civilian infrastructure and to allow unimpeded access for all Palestinians to their educational institutions.
9. To publicise our policy of twinning with [Palestinian University] by erecting a plaque at some place on [your university]’s campus.

\textsuperscript{iii} United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), accessed 21 November 2009 http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/opt/
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Department for Children International/Palestine Section, “Cast Lead: As many as 352 children killed” http://www.dci-pal.org/english/display.cfm?CategoryId=1&DocId=917, accessed 6 January 2010


Figures as of 21 November 2009, Defence for Children International/Palestine Section, www.dci-pal.org


United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), accessed 21 November 2009
http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/opt/


GISHA, January 1, 2008 “Despite the State Attorney Office’s Commitment to High Court Israel Still Preventing at least 625 Students from Leaving Gaza” http://www.gisha.org

Amira Hass, Ha’aretz, “Gazan Students Unable to Study in the West Bank”, 16 February 2009


Ratified by Israel in 1991