

## **Campaign to let Zohair Abu-Shaban study at Imperial**

**Proposers: Salman Waqar (Islamic Society)  
Seconders: Yoni Weiner (Jewish Society)**

### **This Union Notes**

1. Zohair Abu-Shaban is a young Palestinian with a UK visa and scholarship to study for an MSc in Electronic Engineering at Imperial College.
2. Zohair has enrolled at Imperial for the 2008/2009 academic session but is unable to leave Gaza because the borders are closed.
3. Zohair has contacted students at Imperial in the hope that we can raise awareness of his case and the difficulties Palestinian students face in fulfilling their dreams and ambitions.

### **This Union Further Notes**

4. Over 200 students signed a petition requesting the Union campaign on Zohair's behalf. These signatures were gathered on a single day and an updated count will be reported to the Council meeting.

### **This Union Believes**

5. Israel is the controlling power in Gaza. Hence Israel can, and should, allow Zohair and students like him to leave the territory in order to study abroad.
6. Egypt has a border with Gaza, which it operates in accordance with international agreements. Hence Egypt also has a responsibility to allow Palestinian students to leave the territory.
7. A similar case- concerning a student at Bradford University- was resolved successfully with the aid of the University and NUS actively campaigning for his cause (Let Khaled Study Campaign) 2.
8. Zohair's case has been publicised in the UK and US press (articles in the Guardian<sup>3</sup> and Hartford Courant in Connecticut<sup>4</sup> respectively) as well as in Imperial College's Student Newspaper (Felix).

### **This Union further believes**

9. That as Zohair has enrolled at Imperial, the Union has an obligation to support him.
10. Both Imperial College and Imperial College Union must take a lead in campaigning on this issue as one of its members is directly affected.
11. Should Zohair be able to leave Gaza in the next few weeks it should be his choice whether to join his course this year or to defer.
12. That the ability of Palestinian students to undertake normal activities, such as studying, and to travel abroad is an important aspect to secure a lasting peace to the Israel-Palestine conflict.

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2. <http://www.letkhaledstudy.co.uk/>

3. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2008/sep/11/middleeast.israelandthepalestinians>

4. <http://www.courant.com/news/opinion/commentary/hc-commentaryabushaban0831.artaug31.0.1352352.story>

5. <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/article4025716.ece>.

### **This Union resolves**

13. To actively campaign in support of Zohair's attempts to leave Gaza to come to study at Imperial, and in support of students in similar positions.
14. That the President is mandated to lead this campaign and report on progress.
15. To lobby the College to publicly campaign for Zohair, and students like him, to be allowed to leave Gaza.
16. To lobby the College and EEE department to support Zohair in distance learning until he is able to leave Gaza.
17. To make it a priority to establish formal contact with Zohair and support him in every issue until he comes and joins his course.

### **This Union Further resolves**

18. To issue a press release calling on Israel and Egypt to allow Zohair, and students in similar situations, to leave Gaza.
19. To urge academics with ties to Israeli and Egyptian peers and institutions to lobby their own governments to allow Zohair, and students like him, to leave Gaza.
20. To work with like-minded student societies including Arab, Islamic, Jewish to encourage students to write letters to the relevant embassies.
21. That the President shall write an open letter, copied to the national press, to the Israeli and Egyptian embassies expressing the Union's position and urging that Zohair, and students like him, be allowed to leave Gaza.
22. That the President shall write an open letter, copied to the national press, to the Foreign Secretary urging him that the UK government should make use of its diplomatic channels to support this campaign.
23. That the President shall write an open letter, copied to the national press, to Zohair to express the Union's solidarity with him.
24. To consider supporting protest outside the Israeli and Egyptian embassies before the end of the Autumn term if the situation is not resolved after the above points have been implemented.

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