

Demilitarisation of University Partnerships for Ethical Investment

To lobby the University to immediately terminate its partnerships with Rolls-Royce, BAE Systems and Moog on the BEng Electromechanical Engineering Degree Apprenticeship and to lobby for the creation of new, ethical partnerships policy.

UNISON University of Warwick branch (this Branch) notes

1. The University maintains academic and research partnerships with companies involved in the production of weapons systems or components used in weapons, including Rolls-Royce, BAE Systems, and Moog.
2. The University states that its partners on the BEng Electromechanical Engineering Degree Apprenticeship include Rolls-Royce and Moog¹. Rolls Royce manufactures engines and components used in military aircraft which were deployed in the Israeli bombing on Gaza in May 2021, in which 232 people died, including 65 children.²
3. All of Gaza's universities have been bombed.³
4. The International Court of Justice's recent finding supports plausible evidence of genocide in Israel's attacks on the Gaza Strip.⁴
5. The University Socially Responsible Investment Policy states that the "University is mindful of the need to reduce and, ideally, eliminate, corporate behaviour leading to...environmental degradation [...], armament sales to military regimes [and] human rights violations."⁵ It also signed a joint statement with European universities following the invasion of Ukraine, in which it states that "War is a catastrophe that kills people"⁶.
6. Palestinian trade unionists have called for global support, including by not producing or distributing weapons for and to Israel, taking action against complicit companies involved in implementing Israel's siege of Gaza, and to pressure governments to stop all military trade with Israel⁷.
7. Students and staff face increasing attempts to suppress solidarity with Palestine at UK universities⁸ and the warning from the British Society for Middle East Studies that 'academics and students who have spoken out against war crimes and in solidarity with besieged Palestinians in Gaza have been subject to threatening responses [...] including death threats'.⁹
8. UNISON is nationally affiliated to the Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC), who has asked people to "support the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement¹⁰", and to "organise to kick apartheid off campus".

¹ <https://caat.org.uk/data/companies/moog/>

² <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/israel-gaza-uk-arms-exports-airstrikes-b1851734.html>

³ <https://twitter.com/BirzeitU/status/1720768989834490218?s=20>

⁴ <https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/192/192-20240126-ord-01-00-en.pdf>

⁵ https://warwick.ac.uk/services/finance/corporate_information/socially_responsible_investment_policy

⁶ <https://warwick.ac.uk/students/news/newsevents/standwithukraine/#vc>

⁷ <https://twitter.com/WorkersinPales1/status/1713908923848130880>

⁸ <https://www.brismes.ac.uk/news/brimes-statement-on-the-attack-on-free-speech-on-uk-campuses>

⁹ <https://www.ucu.org.uk/article/12093/UCU--NUS-condemn-education-secretarys-Palestine-comments>

¹⁰ <https://lgpsdivest.org/how-your-fund-is-complicit/>

This Branch believes

1. Education facilitated and promoted by our labour should not be entwined with war and plausible genocides.
2. Partnerships with arms companies contradict the University's Socially Responsible Investment Policy and contribute to the arms trade, corporate profiteering from war, human rights violations, and environmental destruction.
3. Maintaining partnerships with firms complicit in war and plausible genocide contradicts the University's values.

This Branch resolves

1. To lobby the University to immediately terminate its partnerships with Rolls-Royce and Moog on the BEng Electromechanical Engineering Degree Apprenticeship.
2. To lobby the university to divest from companies, or funds which indirectly invest in those companies, which are complicit in human rights abuses in Palestine.
3. To lobby University for the banning of arms companies from attending campus careers fairs, just as tobacco companies are banned.
4. To lobby for the creation of a new ethical partnerships policy, which will review all existing academic and research partnerships and assess potential partnerships with an aim of promoting partnerships with peaceful, sustainable and renewable sectors.
5. To affiliate with Palestine Solidarity Campaign on a branch level.
6. To establish a working group among branch members to lead in supporting Palestine.
7. To publicise and encourage branch members to attend campus and local peaceful protests for Palestinian liberation and immediate ceasefires in Gaza, in alignment with UNISON's policies.
8. To support non-violent direct action and protests against institutions complicit in arms manufacturing for Israel, in line with UNISON's policies.

Proposed by: Yue Zhou

Seconded by: Nick Humphries