



WOLLONGONG
UNDERGRADUATE
STUDENTS'
ASSOCIATION

SEPTEMBER MEETING

AGENDA

Date: 27 September 2021

Time: 18:00

Location: Discord

President: Taani Hendriks

General Secretary:

Imogen Draisma

September Meeting Agenda

Acknowledgement of Country

Attendance

Confirmation of the June Minutes

Business Arising

Correspondence Incoming

Correspondence Outgoing

President's Report

Representative Reports

General Business

Motion to Endorse the 'Stop the Cuts Online Rally'

Moved: Sean McLachlan

Preamble

As part of the ongoing UOW Fightback campaign against attacks to staff and student conditions at our university, an online rally has been called to take place at 12:30pm Wednesday the 29th of September. Like all other political activities members of this union are engaged in, the campaign has had to adapt to the pressures that necessary health restrictions have placed on the viability of in person protests, such as blockade organised by UOW Fightback earlier this year.

The attacks to staff and student conditions at UOW have been devastating, with 185 permanent staff and over 1,500 casual staff made redundant in the last 12 months. The mass sacking of staff members coincided with "temporary" cuts to wages and may see some departments gutted by close to 40%, which will have drastic effects on the quality of education students receive. Despite the current lockdown, cuts handed down from university management have persisted, with the bulk-billed medical centre being the most notable victim to this continued onslaught.

The current situation speaks to the necessity of maintaining the momentum of the Stop the Cuts campaign through the means that remain available. This online rally aims to do this by cohering more staff and students around the issue of the cuts and actively getting them involved in organising.

The content of the rally will include three speakers; Rowan Cahill, who will speak on the situation on campus relative to his experience as a staff member; Alec Hall, fellow union member who will elaborate on the current attacks to student conditions; and Grace Carter; a student activist from the Australian National University who has actively been involved in a similar resistance to university cuts.

Platform:

- 1) WUSA reaffirms its endorsement for the UOW Fightback - Stop the Cuts campaign.
- 2) WUSA encourages its office bearers, representatives and members to promote and attend the event.
- 3) WUSA condemns the actions of UOW management, including Vice Chancellor Patricia Davidson's, to cut the losses of UOW by attacking the wages of staff and the quality of education and services for students.

Action:

- 1) WUSA will continue to share posts about the event on Facebook to promote the event.
- 2) WUSA will reimburse Education Officer Dylon Tomasi \$220 for online promotion for the event.

WUSA Demands the Australian Government Provide Permanent Protection to Afghan Refugees

Moved: Dylon Tomasi

Preamble

1) Western intervention into Afghanistan has left the country in a worse state than when they invaded. The need of many to flee Afghanistan should be recognised and Australia should provide permanent visas and settlement to those who wish to settle here. Australia's refugee policy to date has been horrific and should be reversed.

2) More than 50 percent of the Afghan population live in poverty. The total deaths as a result of the war will likely never be known, but sources cite anywhere from 200,000 to 1 million, with casualties very likely in the millions. The median age in Afghanistan is 18, meaning half of the population has lived their entire life under US occupation and the resultant violence.

2) It is plain the invasion of Afghanistan was not about liberating women, rebuilding a nation or enshrining democracy. 80 percent of suicides recorded in Afghanistan are women, receiving little to no help from the occupiers and their patrons. The US and Australia both have been complicit in funding warlords who actively oppress and destroy women's bodies. Warlords in various provinces the US and Australia have funded have been accused of a vast swathe of war crimes and heinous murders for personal gain, such as bombing weddings, schools and family's homes.

3) Australians themselves have been responsible for committing war crimes and other horrific acts as well. Flying a Nazi flag while on patrol, and drinking from the prosthetic leg of a victim go hand in hand with the actions of Ben Roberts-Smith - accused of executing civilians and prisoners with little regard to the legality or even humanity of those involved. The Brereton Report asserts the breadth and depth of crimes committed by Australian troops goes much deeper than ever previously thought.

4) Images of people fleeing the country with the advance of the Taliban show there is a dire need for a humanitarian response that offers permanent protection for those wishing to flee. Many of those who worked with the Australian government or women whose families worked with other Western forces are undoubtedly in danger. Not to mention ordinary people who wish to oppose the violent and oppressive regime of the Taliban.

5) Therefore, it is imperative Australia increase its refugee intake. The absolute minimum Australia could do after committing untold war crimes and occupying Afghanistan for 20 years. A result of Australia's involvement has created 2.7 million refugees, meaning Alex Hawke's "increase to 3,000 places for Afghan refugees is laughably inadequate.

6) Australia's refugee policy continues to be lauded by far right governments in Europe for its brutality. The systems of offshore and onshore prisons currently house 53 Afghan men, while the punitive system of visas encompasses more than 4,200 Afghan refugees. All of these people should be given permanent protection and citizenship in Australia.

Platform

1) WUSA condemns the invasion of Afghanistan by the Australian government and recognises the role Australia has played in the destruction of the lives of Afghan people.

2) WUSA condemns the claims about Australian soldiers liberating women, rebuilding a failed state and enshrining democracy.

3) WUSA opposes the Islamophobia that has been the basis for many attacks on Muslim communities and is used by the Australian government as a basis for rejecting refugees.

4) WUSA demands an increase in refugee intake from Afghanistan and all Afghan refugees already in the Australian system of processing prisons or visas to be given immediate permanent protection and settlement.

5) WUSA condemns the already existing regime of refugee processing perpetuated by both Liberal and Labor governments; the offshore processing camps; the onshore prisons and solitary hotels; the visa systems that create tiers of access to welfare, education, healthcare and so on. All refugees should be brought to Australia, and settled here if they wish.

Action:

1) This motion will be published on the WUSA Facebook page.

Motion for WUSA to endorse the COP26 Protest

Moved: Kaia Cox

Preamble

"It is unequivocal that human influence has warmed the atmosphere, ocean and land. Widespread and rapid changes in the atmosphere, ocean, cryosphere and biosphere have occurred." -IPCC AR6
We are seeing the impacts of climate change everyday. The recent wildfires in Greece, California, and all over Australia, are because of government inaction to regulate the expulsion of carbon into the atmosphere for decades.

World "leaders" meet every couple of years at fancy events to discuss the essential collaborative action required to combat climate change, like the Conference of Parties (COP). It is essential that CO2 emissions are reduced to net zero by 2050 to avoid the worst predicted levels of warming and climate catastrophe, but we are in a crisis of inaction. Governments in Australia have been complicit in this climate inaction since the 1970s. The ability for millions of people around the world to live in total climatic collapse is at risk, and the policy positions put forward time and time again are not good enough.

The politicians and the CEOs which run the world and control the systems which expel carbon into the atmosphere, have been complicit and stagnant on this action - we have to make it politically impossible for them to continue on the path they've set us on by standing against the criminal inaction of governments worldwide on impending climate disaster.

Platform

- 1.WUSA opposes the University of Wollongong having ties with the fossil fuel industry
- 2.WUSA endorses a national perspective for campaigning against inaction on climate change
- 3.WUSA supports protests for action on climate change.
- 4.WUSA demands emission reductions, and the structural changes required to stop wasteful production practices, and illogical transport

Action

- 1.WUSA will share event and other promotional materials from their page.
- 2.WUSA will contribute \$250 to the production of posters, stickers and other promotional materials, including the boosting of posts on social media.
- 3.WUSA will co-host the facebook event.
- 4.WUSA representatives who support this motion will help with online sharing of event, and will attend event if possible.