

Memorandum on Global Student Cooperation

(Global Student Leadership Summit, London, 18-21 September 2012)

Representatives of student organizations from all over the world met at the Global Student Leadership Summit (GSLS) in London on the 18th-21st of September 2012. GSLS was convened on the 90th anniversary year of NUS UK, with the celebrating union and Europeans Students' Union (ESU) jointly organizing the event. The summit brought together student leaders from around the world to share, learn and critique global education, sustainability, peace and social justice. In addition, the delegates discussed the future cooperation of the unions and student movement in order to strengthen the student voice around the world. The increased impact of the global trends affecting higher education and students elevate the importance and urgency of developing global student cooperation.

Regular communication is a prerequisite to building a regionally balanced network of student organizations that aim to exchange information. Furthermore, we will demonstrate acts of solidarity between the different regions and countries. Hereby we, the student organizations, express our commitment to continue developing and striving for more global cooperation among ourselves.

Methods of Cooperation

The participants of the Global Student Leadership Summit will continue to work on enhancing the global cooperation between students. It is important to keep up the connection made at the GSLS and work towards involving the absent unions in this cooperation. The immediate goal of the Global Student Cooperation is to build a platform for exchanging information and expressing solidarity among student organizations around the world. The platform will operate through further Global Student Leadership Summits, preferably yearly, and by establishing an effective way of communicating online in between the face-to-face meetings. Financing for cooperation should be sought from as many sources as possible, including governments, NGO's, companies and international organizations. Regardless of financing, the organizers have autonomy on the content of the Summit.

Summits

Face-to-face meetings are essential for fostering active connection between student organizations and creating a sense of togetherness and solidarity. The student organizations participating in the Global Student Cooperation will strive to organize such summits on yearly basis. Whenever possible, summits should be organized to coincide with other international meetings. The regional organizations will provide a list of student organizations that should be invited.

The agenda for the summits should be discussed through online communication channels before the summits and the final agenda should be agreed on by the working group preparing the summit as well as the student organization hosting the summit.

The summits may issue statements and declarations. These may be related to either calls for solidarity or policy stances on issues of common interest - such as questions of access to education, human rights, environmental policies, peace and social justice.

Communication

Good communication is essential to succeed in global student cooperation. As now we are globally connected, effective communication plays a major role in the development and functioning of the cooperation.

Communication among the participants of the Global Student Leadership Summit should be started by forming an e-mail list of the participants. Invitations to join the mailing list should also be sent to the unions that are not present. The mailing list will be set up and administered by one of the regional or national unions. The regional organizations will be responsible for having student organizations in their region added to the mailing list. The regional organizations will be responsible for having student organizations in their region added to the mailing list.

As it is our goal to expand our international outreach, it is extremely important for us to understand that we need a very clear and prompt communication with student unions across the globe. In order to be more inclusive to student organizations around the world, we will take measures to accommodate student organizations whose representatives are not comfortable with English language. Measures will be taken to translate at least the most important documents in Spanish, Arabic, Chinese and some of the African languages.

The Global Student Cooperation Working Group will regularly dispatch a newsletter on recent actions taken in preparation for the next summit. These newsletters will be sent through the mailing list of Global Student Cooperation as well as the regional organizations.

GSCWG will work on creating an online discussion forum for the participants in the present existing Global Student Leadership Summit website. Along with that GSCWG will be conducting Skype meetings to work on preparing for the next Summit.

Working Groups

In the short term, the Global Student Cooperation should use an informal, flexible structure. In order to prepare for future summits and to facilitate communication between summits, working groups will form in each Global Student Leadership Summit. The working groups will consist of student organizations, with considerations for regional balance, and will be chaired by one organization.

This working group shall address two major issues: the planning of the next summit and the completion of the internal and external goals determined in the most recent summit plenary session. To plan the next summit, the regionally balanced working group shall delegate tasks relating to, but not limited to, outreach to local membership and national/regional organizations, finances and fundraising, logistics for hosting, and logistics for communication. The regional representatives in the working group shall complete these tasks themselves or contact their national and local affiliates to complete these tasks. Thus, member responsibility in planning the next summit shall fall to both regional and national organizations. In the spirit of cooperation, no organization is solely responsible for the planning of the entire summit.

Second, if the Summit agrees on internal and external goals of cooperation, the working group will also loosely coordinate or observe the collaboration of regional and national organizations on common issues. The working group will be aware of the progress of the Global Student Cooperation on its annual goals to aid in setting the agenda of the next summit.

These two duties of the working group are intended to foster the exchange of information between national and regional organizations in a flexible, collaborative manner. In addition, these two duties are intended to promote the sustainable development of a global community of students.

Action Points

The participating student organizations agree to commit to supporting the continuance of global student cooperation in future. In order to make such cooperation possible, communication channels for the global network of students have to be set up. Additionally, Global Student Cooperation Working Group for preparing the next global summit should be appointed.

Communication Channels

An e-mail list of the participating unions and representatives will be set up within a week of the London Global Student Leadership Summit. This mailing list will be the main medium of communication between the student organizations taking part in the cooperation. Additionally, the student organizations participating in the Global Student Cooperation Working Group will agree on methods of communication among themselves.

Global Student Cooperation Working Group

A preparatory Working Group called the Global Student Cooperation Working Group, or GSCWG for short, will be formed to share the work of organizing the next Summit. The Working Group will ensure that, in addition to maintaining a network of unions that participated in 2012, outreach work will be done to national unions and regional platforms that were not present at the 2012 Summit in London. The outreach work will be coordinated between the Working Group and the regional platforms.

The Working Group will prepare for the next Summit by working out solutions to the following questions.

Practical issues related to organizing the Summit

Fundraising for the Summit will begin well in advance of the 2013 Summit and a diverse set of possible sponsors will be explored. In addition to acquiring sponsors, it would be ideal if the next Summit could be organized to coincide with another international meeting organized by a stakeholder that could provide some support in the organizing effort. The Working Group should also communicate with the potential partners and host organizations about practicalities related to organizing the event, such as accommodation, visas and travel arrangements. Contact will also be made to other global organizations that share the goal of global student cooperation (e.g. the International Union of Students).

Preparing policy issues for discussion at the Summit

In order for the Summit to focus on issues that are relevant to the global student network, preparations should be made on the topics that should be addressed and the possible policy stances that the Summit could agree to take. Possible declarations and other proposals for documents to adopt should be circulated well in advance of the Summit to allow for sufficient time to prepare.

Preparing for further discussion on the future of global student cooperation

For the next Summit, the Working Group will also prepare material for discussion on the future of global student cooperation. The discussion points to prepare will include identifying the issues that are of mutual interest to students as well as identifying the global organizations and processes that the student movement would need to have an influence on. Questions such as enhancing communication between the student organizations and the long-term funding of the global student cooperation will also be explored. Eligibility criteria for participation in future summits should also be explored.

APPENDIX 2: Implementation plan

Setting up communication channels

NUS UK will set up an e-mail list of the participants within two weeks of the Global Student Leadership Summit in London.

Disseminating outcomes

ESU ICWG will communicate the results of the Global Student Leadership Summit to all student organizations that were invited to the summit and invite the absent organizations to join the Global Student Cooperation network and mailing list.

Founding of Global Student Cooperation Working Group

The first Global Student Cooperation Working Group will be chaired by ESU. The chairing organization will be responsible for contacting the unions participating in the working group and calling online meetings for the Working Group. The Working Group will decide on their method of communication among themselves and report monthly to the mailing list of Global Student Cooperation about the work that has been done on preparing the next Summit. The regional platforms present at the London Summit will have a central role in the Working Group. In addition to them, the following unions have already expressed interest in working in the Working Group on following issues:

Practical issues related to organizing the Summit

- CFS (Canada)
- ÖH (Austria)

Preparing policy issues for discussion at the Summit

- NSO (Norway)
- ANOSR (Romania)
- UNEF (France)
- AAUAV (Portugal)

Preparing for further discussion on the future of global student cooperation

- SYL (Finland)
- ANSA (Armenia)
- ISP (India)
- KSU (Kurdistan)
- FAP (Portugal)
- RSU (Russia)