

Executive Summary of the Statement from the LSE Liberated Zone, 11 June 2024

- It has now been **248 days** since the ongoing genocide in Gaza began.
- Negotiators met with the School Management Committee (SMC) today, and discussed demands **Divest, Disaffiliate, Designate, Dedicate, Disengage** and **Defend**.
- The SMC **refused to commit to any disaffiliation** or academic boycott of complicit Israeli educational institutions, despite potential complicity in breaking international law.
- SMC member **Eric Neumayer** defended the **racist** remarks of historian **Benny Morris**.
- The School has applied for both an **Interim Possession Order (IPO)** and **Possession Order (PO)** against students and staff in the Liberated Zone, with a hearing scheduled this week.
- **The school refused to confirm that they would not call the police on the student occupiers.**

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It has now been **247 days** since the ongoing genocide in Gaza began. This weekend, in exchange for four Israeli hostages, **at least 273 Palestinians in Nuseirat refugee camp have been killed** in what has been described as a "trail of destruction". What few remaining hospitals there are left have been completely overwhelmed once again. Not a week goes by without reports of another horrific massacre in Gaza or an act of violence in the West Bank. We once again remind the LSE community this is why the Liberated Zone exists. **In light of the ongoing Nakba, genocide, and occupation of Palestine, the need for LSE to meet our demands has become even more urgent.**

Today, 10 June, negotiators on behalf of the LSE Liberated Zone met with **Eric Neumayer, Andrew Young, and Emma McCoy**, members of the School Management Committee (SMC). Six of our demands: **Divest, Disaffiliate, Designate, Dedicate, and Disengage and Defend**, were discussed today. With regards to the first, **Divestment**, the LSE Liberated Zone welcomes statements from **Eric Neumayer** regarding editing LSE Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) policy.

Specifically, Neumayer stated he supported a review of the school's ESG policy this year, as opposed to in 2026 as planned. The ESG policy governs LSE investment decisions and thus its revision is paramount to ensuring future investments are held to a higher ethical standard. Yet, the Liberated Zone acknowledges reviewing the ESG policy is not in the hands of the SMC, but rather the LSE Council.

Despite this movement on demand one, **Divestment**, and commitments from previous negotiations on demand four, **Designate** (regarding scholarship funding and support), and demand six, **Disengage** (regarding Prevent training), negotiators on behalf of the Liberated Zone were incredibly concerned about comments made by **Eric Neumayer** today. Regarding, **Disaffiliate**, negotiators argued based on rulings from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) stating Israel is plausibly committing genocide,

alongside the International Criminal Court (ICC) warrant against heads of the Israeli state, universities must cut their ties with Israeli institutions. The continuation of such partnerships could eventually implicate LSE in likely war crimes and crimes against humanity, such as those found by the ICC.

Whilst LSE is not currently partnered with any Israeli institutions, the Liberated Zone's demand to not pursue future partnerships or research agreements with any complicit Israeli university was met by the SMC with an adamant no. **Neumayer, Young, and McCoy**, stated that this was because the University does not make "political statements", never acknowledging the politics of their supposedly 'neutral' position, and repeating their "regret" for the outwardly political stance taken regarding Ukraine. Regardless, we are not asking the School to "single out Israel" or to "take sides in a political conflict", as the SMC claims, but rather **acknowledge the precedent set by international law**, and the resulting urgency of the situation necessitating that higher education institutions **Disaffiliate** from Israeli apartheid.

Not only were the SMC obstinate in their refusal to engage with our **Disaffiliate** demand, but **Eric Neumayer** went as far as to defend genocide apologist **Benny Morris** and his comments at LSE in March. **Morris** was invited by the Dean of the Law School, **David Kershaw**, as speaker at an event at which he claimed that he would **"rather be a racist than a bore."** **Neumayer** claims that he **"meant it as a joke... [and] he was under enormous strain"** due to student disruption. This empty defence is a justification of the actions of a man who has previously stated that "[for Palestinians] something like a cage has to be built for them... there is no choice. There is a wild animal there that has to be locked up", and has previously described LSE's own students as a "mob... of angry, bearded, caftaned Muslims... who spoke in broken, obviously newly acquired, English." **Neumayer's** comments are unacceptable, and negotiators were horrified to hear one of the top administrators at our University defend a racist and Islamaphobe —this does not seem to be a particularly 'neutral' position.

Lastly, while discussing our final demand, **Defend, Neumayer, Young, and McCoy** **refused to confirm to the negotiators that the University would not call the police on the student occupiers**, rather, they repeatedly stated that they "cannot accept" the Bloom Building* being closed, and that now "all bets are off". These statements reveal that to LSE leadership forcefully removing students to reopen a building is more important than ending complicity in genocide.

At 16:45, **Allan Blair** delivered the University's application papers for an **Interim Possession Order (IPO) and Possession Order (PO) to the Liberated Zone, with a court date set for later this week**. A statement on the legal implications of these orders will follow shortly, but to the University we say this with clarity: **as students of conscience, we cannot accept our University, its teaching, lectures and research, profiting from the bombing of Palestinians and the near total destruction of the Gaza Strip and its entire educational facility**.

Thus, the administrators at LSE—including those in the School Management Committee and Council—have a choice, do they care more about buildings, or people?

And finally, we remind University leadership that students and staff would be more than willing to leave the Bloom Building*, allowing the space to reopen, as soon as our demands are met.

*Renamed in memorium after Marshall Bloom, an American anti-apartheid and anti-war student activist who was suspended from LSE for leading the first student occupation in the UK here in 1967 against LSE's complicity in Rhodesian apartheid. Bloom subsequently committed suicide following his draft call into the Vietnam War. The building is formally (and now formerly) known as the Marshall Building, but the students condemn any official association of LSE with Sir Paul Marshall, the major owner of GB News and exposed racist, for whom it is named.