

Support for Palestine

The EIS reaffirmed its support for the Palestinian people as a result of two successful motions proposed by Annie McCrae (Edinburgh) and Linzi Moore (South Lanarkshire).

Ms McCrae's motion called for more direct action in protest at Israeli actions, including promoting a boycott of Israeli goods in schools and colleges, and a call on the UK government to halt all arms sales to Israel. Introducing the motion to the AGM, Ms McCrae said, "We asked trade unionists in Palestine what we could best do to help them. They all said, without exception, that the most important thing that we can do is to unite with other trade unions to isolate Israel. It is the best way to win a victory for justice and equality."

Seconding the motion, Lynn Leach (Midlothian) said, "It is time to take action, some really positive, direct action. We have to take a stand against what is happening to the Palestinian people."

Mike Napier (EIS-ULA) also spoke passionately in support of the motion, as did Nicola Fisher (Glasgow), who argued "Negotiation is never going to work with Israel, we need definite
Mike Napier (EIS-ULA) also spoke passionately in support of the motion, as did Nicola Fisher (Glasgow), who argued "Negotiation is never going to

work with Israel, we need definite firm action.” The AGM agreed and voted in favour of the motion by a large majority.

In the related motion, Linzi Moore successfully called for the EIS to highlight the plight of the Palestinian people, and to seek to strengthen links with Palestinian trade unions and education establishments. “There must be peace in Palestine,” said Ms Moore, “and there must be justice for the people of Palestine. Trade unionism was born from solidarity, and we need to work to secure better solidarity between all organisations working for Palestinian rights.”

Seconding the motion, Charlotte Ahmed (Glasgow) said, “The campaign for justice and peace has been reinvigorated by recent demonstrations against events in Gaza. The role of trade unionists in pushing for further action is essential.”

However Kenn Bryce Stafford (Edinburgh) sounded a note of caution, and asked why Palestine should be singled out in the motion when there were so many conflicts and human rights abuses going on around the world.

And first time AGM delegate Joanne Fyfe (Edinburgh) drew on her personal experience of growing up in Northern Ireland to question the terms of the motion. “Things have now changed in Northern Ireland, but this was achieved through cross-

community work and not because we took sides. What will be the view of the children of Palestine and Israel, who are blameless in this conflict, if we as the EIS are seen to take sides?"

But Mike Napier (EIS-ULA) argued, "You can't engage in dialogue while bulldozers are demolishing Palestinian homes. The Israelis would be happy to engage in dialogue forever, while at the same time, away from the negotiation table, they continue to just take what they want from Palestine."

Summing up, Linzi Moore said, "In the spirit of peace, justice and solidarity, I ask you to support the motion". The AGM did just that, backing the motion by a very large majority.