



SUSU **LGBT+** SOCIETY

Wednesday 3rd April 2019

A Statement of Solidarity Regarding Brunei and The LGBT+ Community

The SUSU LGBT+ Society, a student-led group that supports and represents LGBT+ students at the University of Southampton, today joins world leaders and major LGBT+ organisations in condemning the new anti-gay legislation signed into law in Brunei by Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah.

This society believes that the criminalisation of homosexual acts is deplorable in any country, but notes the particular cruelty in this instance of punishment of death by stoning for gay men, and a sentence of 40 lashes for lesbian women.

We also note that the University of Southampton has a building funded by Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah and his government, namely Brunei House at Glen Eyre Halls of Residence, which proudly displays a plaque that indelibly links it to the country's leader and his regime.

Southampton student and society member Daniel Harris has today submitted a motion (see attached appendix) to the university and the student's union asking that the university consider renaming the building and removing the plaque as a show of support and solidarity for future LGBT+ students who may live there.

The SUSU LGBT+ Society fully supports this motion, and asks that the University of Southampton take urgent action to address this matter.

We firmly believe that the University of Southampton, and the Southampton University Student's Union (SUSU), should be a place where all students feel safe, welcome, and supported. This includes future LGBT+ students who, on being assigned a room in university-owned accommodation, should not be left wondering why they are living in a building named after a country and a regime that has been internationally condemned for their anti-gay policies.

For further questions related to this matter, the society can be contacted via email at president.lgbt@susu.org.

Wednesday, 3rd April 2019

Motion to rename “Brunei House” Halls of Residence

To whom it may concern,

On Wednesday 3rd April 2019, the country of Brunei introduced a series of new laws, which have received widespread international condemnation. The most notable of these is the criminalisation of sexual intercourse between men, which now carries the maximum penalty of death by stoning, as well as the criminalisation of sexual intercourse between women, which now carries the maximum penalty of 40 strokes of the cane. Other laws introduced include punishing theft by amputation and whipping for minors.

In order to show support and solidarity with the LGBT+ community in the face of these new laws, I would like to put forward a motion to remove any and all association between the University and the country of Brunei, as well as its leader, Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah. This particularly applies to Brunei House, part of the Glen Eyre Halls of Residence complex, and would entail the removal of the commemorative plaque dedicated to the Sultan.

This would be a minor change on the University’s part, yet would send a clear message that the UoS community does not support or condone the use of such inhumane and barbaric punishment in law.

I am concerned that not to acknowledge these circumstances would set a dangerous precedent that the University is unsympathetic towards, or even willing to ignore, its LGBT+ population. As a student who lived in this Hall of Residence during their first year, and who identifies as LGBT+, I am disheartened to know that my Halls were a gift from a nation willing to persecute its citizens based on their sexual orientation – a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 in UK law. Future students may well feel less safe in, or be deterred from applying to, this particular Hall of Residence.

I hope that this letter conveys the importance of its motion to the University and its community, as well as the urgency to act. I look forward to your response in due course.

Yours faithfully,

Daniel Harris