



Resolution on Freedom of Expression in France

On October 16, 2020, Samuel Paty, professor of history, geography, moral and civic education has been killed with great violence by a religious terrorist. When a citizen dies advocating freedom of expression, defending one of our most fundamental freedoms, it is the entire Republic and educative system which has been touched at their hearts.

Educated at the beginnings of our Constitution, "France is an indivisible, secular, democratic and social Republic". Today more than ever, in the face of the rise of hatred, we must remain united so that obscurantism and its repercussions, these poisons no longer have their place, neither in our society, nor in our community, or in any country.

This act of nameless violence reminds us that dark day in January 2015 when these same extremists murdered journalists from Charlie Hebdo, a satirical newspaper.

This attack directly affects higher education, and especially teachers. It affects these women and men who participate every day in the emancipation of youth by developing and initiating critical thinking and their civic awareness, by encouraging them to express themselves freely.

It is through actions of popular education, deconstruction and education, carried out by the public service within school programs, but also by associations and citizens that we will succeed together in establishing a climate of peace and tolerance.

These people will never have our fear: we will continue to learn, to read, to laugh, to discover ourselves and to discover others on the benches of the University and we will continue eternally to draw freedom because we are the young citizens of today and tomorrow.

Some media and politicians, in France and internationally, have seized on this act and used it to feed dark thoughts against Islam. It is certainly necessary to fight against extreme islamism, but we must remain united with believers living their times in peace: extremists islamists are not representative of the religions they claim to represent.

The aim of this resolution is firstly to prevent any action repressing the teaching of freedom of expression in higher education establishments in all their comprehensiveness at European level: it is a fundamental right, an education that allows young people to emancipate themselves and build a critical awareness. More, no student organization should be criticized and threatened for taking positions in line with this resolution as UNEF has been, for the sake



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of higher education and representation. Entry into higher education must be the same for everyone, regardless of our beliefs or mores, as long as we practice in peace.

It also tends to push ESU to pay close attention to separatism and rising hatred: we must not respond to hatred with hatred. Let us remember: education is the most powerful weapon to change the world.

Proposed by: FAGE

Seconded by: ANSA, FZS

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The European Students' Union (ESU) is the umbrella organisation of 46 National Unions of Students (NUS) from 40 countries. The aim of ESU is to represent and promote the interests of students at the European level towards all relevant bodies and in particular the European Union, Bologna Follow Up Group, Council of Europe and UNESCO.