



SOCIAL POLICY COMMISSION 17/18

Urgent Meeting
University of Malta, the KSU Common Room
31st October 2017, 18.30

MINUTES

Gabriella Sutton (Commissioner): In light of recent events, the commission decided to call an urgent KPS meeting. Our aim is to deviate fully from all that is bipartisan and discuss one of the core elements of democracy; that is the system of appointment of the AG and the Police Commissioner.

If there are any media organisations present, kindly identify yourselves.

Insite

The only documentation of what is being said throughout the meeting will be taken by the Social Policy Commission so as to ensure that everyone present feels comfortable to express his opinion.

It is important to point out that KSU immediately reacted to the news by organising a vigil on quadrangle. Freedom of speech is a fundamental human right and it is our duty to defend it. We also encourages student organisations to publish a poster on their page and were present at the nation-wide demonstrations.

I would now like to pass on the microphone to you to discuss how can we mobilise students further on the issue and what our position as a student body should be on the matter of the appointment of the Police Commissioner and Attourney General.

Jean Gove' (GhST): You mentioned that we should stay away from bipartisan politics but this is fundamentally a political issue. It is something that affects us. Now is the moment for us, as a student body to mobilise ourselves and constructively move forward, either by means of a subcommittee or a press release. We should take a position in favour of calling for the resignation of the Commissioner and AG, seeing how they haven't fulfilled their duties, not only under this administration, as this has been going on under several administrations. The Constitution is good but if it's manipulated by people then it's not effective. If I need something I speak to a politician. When we speak of something fair or free we are laughed at. Yesterday has been a whole session of bickering in parliament. Arguing that Nationalists were in government for 25 years and they haven't done anything about it isn't an effective way of solving the problem. Saying that the other side has scandals as well doesn't solve anything. It is up to us to speak up. The flag we're receiving from media is that we only protest when something affects us. Moving forward, we should agree with the publishing of a press release or subcommittee. We have to do something that is sustained and prolonged.

Gabriella Sutton (Commissioner): I would just like to point out that it's specifically the election process of the AG and Commissioner that will be discussed



Alexander Hili (viewing gallery): I completely agree with what Jean said and I want to make another important point. Currently, politics in Malta are focused on bipartisanship, that's the truth of the matter, but it's only like that because we let it be so. You represent the agenda of the students; those who can act. We need to act. If someone goes up to a minister to ask how people of trust get chose, the reply would be because they show promise. This has been going on administration after administration. There's also an anomaly in the fact that the AG is chosen by the prime minister but need $\frac{2}{3}$ majority of parliament to lose his position. Every bit of change in society happens when students speak up. Everyday, individuals need to stand up and use their voice. Occupy justice was impressive. It wasn't just women. It was them and their families. Everyone was there trying to fight for what's right.

Branson Mifsud (MIRSA): We need to come together and take concrete action. Demonstrations are good but if we need things to change we need to directly appeal to the legislation. The biggest issue we have to overcome is that of bridging both parts of the country in terms of bipartisan politics. Apart from demonstrations, we need to discuss and we need to present a united front, irrespective of political opinion.

Alexander Hili (Viewing gallery): If you have 5000, 6000 students in the street, you can be heard. You can start by making a list of people that need to be contacted and take action accordingly. At the moment, everyone is listening so let's put our voice out there.

Alex Ripard (laeste): Corruption is basically part of us now. The issue isn't as simple as let's go out and protest as it is not effective enough.

Mathias Mallia (Insite): We have been speaking in the categoricals. We've heard great motivational speeches but we need to be more practical. We need to find out what we're going to do. When, how and logistics of the sort. We need to act.

Ian Zerafa DESA: We need to decide what we're going to do and how we're going to do it. Today we're focusing on the election process but there are also other areas that need to be tackled, namely the civil service, and the chairman of PBS. He's appointed politically and this leaves us in danger.

Jean Gove' (GħST): I agree. I don't know if we can decide now for a public statement for a position in favour of the resignation of the Police Commissioner and AG and then elect a subcommittee.

Jake Boyle (CSA): Just for clarification, you want to take a vote for the removal of the police commissioner and the AG, right?

Beppe Galea (SDM): I strongly encourage students to speak up. This is something we should push ourselves.

Sarah Portelli (HoASA): We should also target other institutions such as MCAST to present a united front.



Stefan Galea (ESO): We have every right to protest. If we don't try how can our voice reach those that need to be reached? The attendance at the vigil was abysmal. We have a chance to fight for what's right.

Jean Gove' (GħST): That is why a subcommittee is needed to see who will coordinate these things.

Robert Napier (KSU): I just would like to remind you that we started the meeting by saying that we need to stir away from bipartisan politics. Don't you think that if we do push for the resignation of the police commissioner and the AG, the media will turn around and say that we're saying this because the students are bipartisan and that we're putting forward such a statement because there's a particular political party in government. Shouldn't we go a step further and try to make sure that the constitutional changes that are due, are actually implemented?

Beppe Galea (SDM): I agree with what you said and we should also mention the declaration sent to the president for $\frac{2}{3}$ majority for election.

Alex Ripard (laeste): Irrespective of how we go about this, the resignation of the Commissioner and AG needs to be a sub-issue of it. It cannot be the main focus. If it's the main thing we're pushing for, it's not as effective. We need to push for elimination of bipartisan politics.

Jean Gove' (GħST): It's time for a statement. I don't see how pushing for the resignation is mutually exclusive to the constitutional reform.

Alex Ripard (laeste): Just to clarify, I don't want us to not push for resignation. But the main focus needs to be on the elimination of bipartisan politics.

Alexander Hili (Viewing gallery): If we push for constitutional change, it's because the method of appointment of the AG and the Police Commissioner are the root to the problem. If we're pushing for the elimination of these people from their roles, we're automatically pushing for change.

Mathias Mallia (Insite): I'd like to address one issue: I worked for a media organisation before and it's very easy to get labelled but everyone working there didn't care. Anyone who screws up will be attacked. We shouldn't be afraid of being tied with one side or the other. If it's the right thing to do then it's the right thing to do.

Jean Gove' (GħST): We should address the statement to parliament. They should live up to the institution they are in. If it does happen that students are labelled as nationalists then the role of KPS would be to counteract that.

Steve Zammit Lupi (KSU): We should also publish a statement and appeal for political maturity. It is disgusting how political parties have hijacked this to score political points. As students that want to be the leaders of tomorrow we should issue a statement saying that this is unacceptable.



Stefan Galea (ESO): What I'd also like to add is that I believe that university should join forces with other institutions. As University students we have an attachment to a certain political party. If we release something like that we will be labelled so it only makes sense that we join forces with other institutions to present a united front.

Alex Ripard (laeste): If we can maybe reach out to other institutions such as MCAST and help them form subcommittees to work on this. It would be the 2 largest educational institutions working together on this and that can leave a huge impact.

Robert Napier (KSU): There seems to be general consensus for a statement pushing forward for political maturity, $\frac{2}{3}$ majority for the appointment of the Police Commissioner and AG, to be implemented with immediate effect and resignation of the current AG and Police Commissioner

Subsequently a subcommittee shall be formed.

Gabriella Sutton (Commissioner): We'll move to a vote on the above.

Votes Against: NIL

Abstentions: GhMU MHSA ESA GhSL SHS KSU

Votes in favour: ASCS SIERA DESA CSA S-Cubed GUG MMSA Insite HoASA BETAPSI MADS laeste MIRSA WE ARE JEF ESO GhST TSA ICTSA ELSA SACES UESA SDM COMMA TDM Pulse MPSA

Robert Napier (KSU): The main reason why KSU is abstaining is because the council will abide by what the majority of organisations want to do.

Gabriella Sutton (Commissioner): Motion passes. We will draft the PR and send it to all organisations via email. Kindly be cooperative and send in any feedback as soon as possible.

Meeting adjourned: 19.45