



Originally Presented on:	2/16/2016
Type of Action:	Sense-of-the-Body
Status/Result:	New Business

1 S.A. Resolution #29
2 Promoting Fair and Humane Labor Practices in Qatar
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4 ABSTRACT: The Student Assembly, Amnesty International at Cornell University, and Cornell
5 Organization for Labor Action recommend that Cornell University take renewed action to promote
6 fair and humane labor practices in Qatar.
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9 **Sponsored by: Matthew Indimine '18**

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11 **Whereas**, Qatar enacted its Law No. 21 of 2015 in December 2016, claiming the legislation would retire its
12 controversial kafala system of labor sponsorship that subjects mostly non-citizen migrant workers to
13 passport confiscation, false contracts, and squalid housing conditions, among other abuses;
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15 **Whereas**, according to Amnesty International’s December 2016 report on Qatar, the recently enacted Law
16 No. 21 of 2015 fails to “significantly change the exploitative relationship between employers and
17 workers” or abolish the kafala system;
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19 **Whereas**, the International Trade Union Confederation March 2014 report “The Case Against Qatar” found
20 appalling conditions for workers in Qatar, including the eight universities in Education City, and
21 Sharan Burrow, ITUC General Secretary, said about the new law changes: “Qatar has re-named the
22 appalling kafala system, but the fact is that migrant workers will remain bonded to their employers.
23 Putting new labels on old laws does not remove the stain of modern slavery, and workers will
24 continue to be forced to work under a feudal employment system.”
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26 **Whereas**, these concerns were expressed by Amnesty International at Cornell University and the Cornell
27 Organization for Labor Action in a memo to President Rawlings on January 6, 2017;
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29 **Whereas**, this memo outlined concrete recommendations from Amnesty International specialists on how
30 Qatar ought to tackle the fundamental drivers of migrant worker exploitation, including measures to
31 end the restrictive exit permit system;
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33 **Whereas**, evidence-based assessments have shown labor conditions to be particularly exploitative at World
34 Cup 2022 construction sites, which sit only a few miles away from Cornell’s Education City campus;
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36 **Whereas**, the urgency of intervening to assist World Cup laborers and workers in Qatar at large was
37 underlined by coordinated actions by student groups at eight international universities with
38 Education City campuses (including Cornell University) in November 2016;
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40 **Whereas**, the Director of UCL Qatar confirmed in a letter to the Campaigns and Fundraising Officer of the
41 UCLU Amnesty International Society that Education City institutions play active roles in shaping
42 Qatari labor policy;
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44 **Be it therefore resolved**, that the Student Assembly, Amnesty International at Cornell University, and
45 Cornell Organization for Labor Action request that Cornell University publicly affirm that Qatar’s
46 Law No. 21 of 2015 fails to abolish the kafala system or adequately address worker exploitation in
47 Qatar;



Cornell University Student Assembly

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49 **Be it further resolved,** that the Student Assembly, Amnesty International at Cornell University, and Cornell
50 Organization for Labor Action recommend that the University should publicly and privately push for
51 the acceleration of the labor reform process in Qatar, and release a detailed plan of how it will go
52 about doing so;

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54 **Be it further resolved,** that the Student Assembly, Amnesty International at Cornell University, and Cornell
55 Organization for Labor Action recommend that President Rawlings, in the interest of transparency,
provide the dates of the President's Council forums; convened by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint
Nasser and leaders of the other branch campuses in Education City;

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58 **Be it further resolved,** that the Student Assembly, Amnesty International at Cornell University, and Cornell
59 Organization for Labor Action requests that Cornell University reveal whether or not there has been
60 any further evidence against labor abuse occurring on Cornell's satellite campus in Education City;

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62 **Be it further resolved,** that the Student Assembly, Amnesty International at Cornell University, and Cornell
63 Organization for Labor Action requests that Cornell University release a full, updated and
64 comprehensive list of actions that Cornell has taken to protect workers at the Qatar campus;

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66 **Be it finally resolved,** that the Student Assembly, Amnesty International at Cornell University, and Cornell
67 Organization for Labor Action requests that the University acknowledge that the Qatari laws set only
68 a minimum level of treatment, and as such the University should heed the International Trade Union
69 Confederation's recommendation that it allow unionization for all workers at its Education City
campus, recognize legitimate worker representatives at its Education city campus and negotiate terms
and conditions with such representatives.

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72 **Respectfully Submitted,**

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74 **Christopher Hanna '18**
75 *Co-Facilitator, Amnesty International at Cornell University*

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77 **Xavier Eddy '19**
78 *Member, Cornell Organization for Labor Action*

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80 **Matthew Indimine '18**
81 *Executive Vice President, Student Assembly*

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83 *(Reviewed by: Executive Board, (6-0-0), 2/12/2017)*