



at the  of our union



Black, Asian and Ethnic Minorities Conference 2010

Wintergardens
Eastbourne.

Agenda



UNITE - National Black, Asian and Ethnic Minorities Conference 2010

27th-28th February 2010 Gold Room, Winter Gardens, Eastbourne

AGENDA

Saturday 27th February 2010

11am- 6pm

1. **JOINT SESSIONS WITH ALL NATIONAL EQUALITIES CONFERENCES**
Floral Hall, Winter Gardens, Eastbourne
Joint General Secretaries Report
Tony Woodley Derek Simpson
Chaired by : Chair Unite Executive Council – Tony Woodhouse
2. Joint Equalities Panel – The Election and the Future for Equalities
Chaired by: Diana Holland, Assistant General Secretary Equalities & Organising
4. Opening of Unite BAEM Conference
5. Chair's Address
7. AGS/National Officer, Equalities - Address
8. Panel Session: Black, Asian and Ethnic Minorities in the Workplace, in the Union and Campaigning
9. Workshops and Report Backs
10. Guest Speaker: Show Racism the Red Card

RECESS

Sunday 28th February 2010

9.15am-1pm

11. Elections
 - (a) Standing Orders Committee for National Equalities Conference 2012 – two to be elected
 - (b) Unite delegation to the 2010 TUC (13th-16th September in Manchester) - one to be elected
 - (c) Unite delegation to the 2011 TUC (Brighton) - one to be elected)
 - (d) One substitute delegate for 2010 and 2011 TUC
12. Guest Speakers: Moroccan Worker from Gibraltar
13. Motions
14. Way Forward

LUNCH

CLOSE

Nb The agenda may be varied to accommodate guest speakers.

Motions for Black, Asian, & Ethnic Minorities Conference

1. End Employment Practices That Discriminate Against BAEM People In Seeking Employment

This Conference notes with concern the findings of a study conducted by the Department of Works and Pensions about discrimination by employers.

The DWP sent out 3,000 bogus applications to employers with a mix of applicants whose qualifications and work experience were similar but with names that were British and foreign-sounding. The study found strong evidence to indicate that employers were discriminating against applicants with foreign sounding names by rejecting those applications even if the qualifications and experience was similar to or superior to that of candidates with British names.

This Conference further notes its concern about the practice of asking BAEM employees to provide evidence of their nationality and immigration status even when they have been with their employer for several years.

The Conference calls on this Union nationally and the TUC to:

- lobby this and any successive government to name and shame the employers targeted in the DWP study found to be guilty of discriminatory behaviour ;
- issue clear guidance to members, employees and workers about what to do if they are asked to provide proof of their nationality and immigration status; and
- continue to campaign for fair and effective employment and anti-discrimination legislation to improve the lives of all people living and working in the United Kingdom

London and Eastern

2. Public Sector Equality Duties

Conference welcomes that the Equality Bill will be extending the public sector equality duties beyond race, disability and gender to introduce a new single public sector equality duty to cover eight protected characteristics, adding age, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and pregnancy and maternity.

However, Conference is disappointed that the Government has not properly enforced the existing public sector duties. The public sector duty to promote race equality was the first to be introduced following the McPherson review, yet the Government has allowed public sector organisations to reduce the duty to little more than a “tick box exercise” which has not had a significant impact on the labour market position of BAEM workers in the public sector.

Conference calls on the union to:-

- campaign for the Government to ensure that clear guidance and training is given to organisations covered by the public sector equality duties and that the duties are properly enforced;
- campaign for the public sector duties to be extended to cover the private, not-for-profit and voluntary sectors: and

ensure that all union officers and public sector reps receive training on the public sector equality duties.

South West

3. Equality Reps

This BAEM Committee calls on the Unite Conference to put pressure on the government to ensure that Equality Reps have legislation put in place for them similar to that currently enjoyed by Health and Safety Reps and Learning Representatives. This Committee also urges Conference to accept the mandate for all workplace reps to elect an Equality representative onto their committee's and ensure that they have adequate time on the agenda to discuss Equality issues appropriate to that particular workplace.

North West

4. Union Equality Reps

Conference congratulates the union on the success of the two union Equality Reps' Project in increasing the number of Unite the union Equality Reps (UERs), developing the UERs' toolkit and negotiators' guide and introducing an accredited UER training programme.

It is important that we encourage a more diverse range of members to join and become active in the union, including BAEM workers, and the UER role can be the first step in doing this for BAEM members. The union must reflect the workforce in which we are organising and operating, if we are to grow and gain strength in the future.

Conference calls on the union to ensure that the momentum is not lost with the end of the second UER Project in February 2010 and that:

- all Officers and Reps continue to encourage and support members to come forward to take on the UER role and carry out the UER training programme;
- it is a priority that negotiations take place with employers for recognition agreements to include that UERs are given facilities and paid time off to carry out their role; and
- the union continues its campaign for statutory rights for UERs.

South West

5. Azure Card

Conference is deeply concerned at the introduction of the new Azure Card which was launched in Glasgow in November 2009 without a pilot and is now being rolled out across the UK. The card is for people who have been refused sanctuary but cannot return home through no fault of their own, or those who are waiting on an appeal of their case.

This card will replace the old system of support, which was given only in supermarket vouchers. These could be exchanged for cash with ordinary citizens, enabling people to access cash for transport, to shop in cheaper local markets and charity shops, and to buy essential items such as nappies or phone cards. Now as only one card is given to each family seeking sanctuary in the UK they cannot be exchanged for cash. The Regional BAEM Committee have major concerns about the impact that this cashless system will have on women and children.

The government claims that the Azure card will be better than the old supermarket voucher as they will be accepted in a wider range of supermarkets and high street stores. However, people in this situation will not be able to access cash for public transport, phone cards and other essential items that are taken for granted. Citizens Monitoring Teams around the country, organized by Citizens for Sanctuary, have already uncovered a number of issues with the cards, from the high price of winter clothing in high street shops compared to charity shops, to administrative problems with the cards. In Glasgow, those who have been issued the card have been unable to use it in Boots, even though it was signed up to the scheme. Those receiving the cards, often women with young children, are still forced to walk the nearest participating shop – which can be as much as an hour's walk. Card holders are often asked to present I.D. and explain why they are using the cards, making everyday shopping a demeaning and stigmatizing experience.

This new card will impact around 10,000 people who have come to the UK to seek sanctuary from persecution: around 800 live in Scotland.

Therefore we call on the National BAEM Conference to:

- Highlight this issue at all levels of Unite.
- Campaign to abolish the voucher & Azure system and introduce a cash system
- Contact Alan Johnson (Home Secretary) asking for a meeting to discuss this issue
- Gather evidence of the impact of the Azure Card

Scotland

6. Hate Crime

This Conference calls upon Unite the Union to launch a National Campaign linking all Equality Committees around this issue.

It is evident from recent Police Reports across the UK that Hate crime is rising. In Wales Hate Crime is noted as “any offence committed against a person, or a person’s property which is perceived by the victim or any other person as being motivated by prejudice or hate”. (Gwent Police Community Cohesion Team)

Hate Crime is also a workplace issue and it is vital that employers not only acknowledge the detrimental impact Hate Crime has in the workplace, but, more importantly works with local Unite Reps and Officers to eradicate it.

This Conference further calls upon Unite Union to ensure all Equality Reps are adequately trained to deal with the impact of Hate Crime and produce a suitable support pack for all Officers and Reps to use, which should include contact information of local/regional/national support organisations.

Wales

7. Stop the Far Right

That this conference recognises that the British National Party is a fascist and a racist organisation that stands for an all white Britain and the elimination of basic democratic rights. It seeks to attract votes on the basis of racism, homophobia, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and the vilification of refugees and asylum seekers.

Conference is further alarmed that the 2009 European elections saw the BNP poll of 27,174 votes in Scotland, the highest vote they have ever achieved in the country.

It is with grave concern that this conference notes the forming of Scottish Defence League in Scotland too.

There is no place in Scotland or indeed anywhere else in the United Kingdom for the extremist defence leagues, their vile views and their hatred of our Muslim community. Their attacks on Muslims should not be tolerated in our multi-cultural society.

We are proud of our record in challenging racism and bigotry & in safeguarding our minority communities but we cannot become complacent . We must become united in fighting politics that divide communities & promote hatred.

Conference calls on Unite Black Workers' conference to :

- Support means of opposing so called "Defence Leagues".
- Actively campaign against the BNP.
- Work with Anti- Racist groups to expose the true identity of the party.
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Scotland

8. Justice 4 Cleaners Campaign.

This Conference expresses its concern that the Justice 4 Cleaners' campaign may no longer be resourced by the National Organising Unit.

This Conference calls for assurances that the important gains, both politically and industrially will be built on.

We therefore call for our union to ensure that it is fully resourced and is in place to continue our highly successful campaign amongst cleaners, both regionally and nationally.

London and Eastern

9. Inclusivity

That the conference accepts the issue of equality to be in the forefront of the union's main stream activities and that the BAEM is to be inclusive of all Black, Asian and Ethnic Minority disadvantaged groups and individuals.

West Midlands

10. Increasing BAEM Participation within Unite

This conference to consider looking at ways that encourage participation within the formal structures of our union to incorporate and allow lay members from BAEM to take a more active role within the constitutional structures.

We believe that the current rules place a barrier to participation within the constitutional constraints and that inclusive participation could increase involvement and remove these barriers.

North East, Yorkshire & Humberside

11. Structures

The new Unite Black Asian and Ethnic minority structure does not meet the needs of Black Asian and Ethnic minority members, therefore we would like to be a sector in our own rights rather than an add on within the equality structure”.

West Midlands

Composites and Withdrawal of Motions

The Standing Orders Committee recommend that:-

(a) Motions 3 and 4 be withdrawn in favour of the following composite

Composite 1 – Union Equality Reps.

Conference congratulates the union on the success of the two union Equality Reps' Project in increasing the number of Unite the union Equality Reps (UERs), developing the UERs' toolkit and negotiators' guide and introducing an accredited UER training programme.

It is important that we encourage a more diverse range of members to join and become active in the union, including BAEM workers, and the UER role can be the first step in doing this for BAEM members. The union must reflect the workforce in which we are organising and operating, if we are to grow and gain strength in the future.

Conference calls on the union to ensure that the momentum is not lost with the end of the second UER Project in February 2010 and that:

- all Officers and Reps continue to encourage and support members to come forward to take on the UER role and carry out the UER training programme;
- it is a priority that negotiations take place with employers for recognition agreements to include that UERs are given facilities and paid time off to carry out their role; and
- the union continues its campaign for statutory rights for UERs and to put pressure on the government to ensure that Equality Reps have legislation put in place for them similar to that currently enjoyed by Health and Safety Reps and Learning Representatives.

Conference also urges that all workplace reps elect Equalities representative onto their committee's and ensure that they have adequate time on the agenda to discuss Equalities issues appropriate to that particular workplace.

Standing Orders

National Women's, Black, Asian & Ethnic Minorities (BAEM) Disabled Members, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans (LGBT) and Young Members Conferences

1) Purpose

The National Equalities Conferences have the following purposes:

- 1.1 to set key policy for women's, black, Asian & ethnic minorities', disabled members', LGBT and young members' equality as appropriate, provided that it is not inconsistent with the general policy and objectives of the union
- 1.2 to elect representatives to attend the annual TUC Congress
- 1.3 to elect the Standing Orders Committee for the following National Women's, BAEM, Disabled Members and LGBT Conferences

2) Composition and Size of National equalities conferences

- 2.1 National equalities conferences will be comprised as in the attached scheme of representation agreed by the EC September 2009, which is based on appropriate regional membership.

3) Delegates and attendees

- 3.1 The National equalities conferences will be open to all accountable representatives of workers elected by the appropriate Regional equalities conferences, as set out in Rule 11.5, (and in EC Guidance on Rule 9 on Young Members).
- 3.2 All delegates will be allocated a numbered seat and will retain that for the duration of conference.
- 3.3 Appropriate women/BAEM Executive Council members not elected as delegates shall be invited to attend on an *ex officio* basis.

4) Chair

- 4.1 The Conference plenary shall be chaired by the Chair of the Executive Council.

- 4.1.1 The Women's Conference shall be chaired by the chair of the National Women's Committee; the BAEM Conference shall be chaired by the chair of the National BAEM Committee; the Disabled Members Conference shall be chaired by the chair of the National Disabled Members Committee; the National LGBT Conference shall be chaired by the chair of the National LGBT Committee; the National Young Members Conference shall for 2010 elect a chair at the Conference.
- 4.2 The Chair shall only have an ordinary vote on all matters if elected as a delegate.
- 4.4 The Chair shall not have a casting vote.

5) Secretary

- 5.1 The Assistant General Secretary Equalities/National Officer or other employee shall act as Secretary to the conference - advising the chair as appropriate and recording decisions taken and the outcome of the elections.

6) Order of Business

- 6.1 The Order of Business for the Conference shall include:
1. Joint General Secretaries Plenary
 2. Election of delegates to form the SOC for the following National equalities conferences
 3. Assistant General Secretary/National Officer Equalities' Introduction and Apologies
 4. Assistant General Secretary/National Officer Equalities' Report inc national strategy for women, BAEM, disabled, LGBT, young members
 5. Consideration of composites and motions approved by Standing Orders Committee inc noting withdrawn motions
 6. Election of delegates to the annual TUC Congress for the next two years
 7. Political, international and other speakers

7) Conduct of elections

- 7.1 All nominees in conference elections shall be individually nominated and seconded. Nominees who do not attend may be elected provided they have given an appropriate apology reported by the National Officer and accepted by conference.
- 7.2 Votes shall be cast by a ballot vote or by show of hands from amongst those delegates present at the Conference.
- 7.2 Any dispute about the conduct of an election should be settled by the Chair. If it is not possible to settle any dispute at the Conference, then an appeal should in the first be lodged with the Standing Orders Committee which has overall responsibility for the conduct of the elections.
- 7.3 In the unlikely event that any such dispute cannot be settled, an appeal against the decision of the Chair can be forwarded to the Joint General Secretaries, who may delegate handling the appeal to an appropriate senior official.

8) Conduct of Business

- 8.1 The Chair shall be responsible for the conduct of the meeting. Delegates may only speak when called by the Chair. The Chair shall have discretion on whether to allow a delegate to speak more than once on a subject.
- 8.2 The mover of a motion shall be allowed five minutes and subsequent speakers three minutes each. No delegate shall be allowed to speak more than once on any motion except the mover who shall have the right of reply.
- 8.3 Next business, that the vote be taken or such other procedural motions may be moved and seconded by any delegate who has not previously spoken during the debate. There shall be no speeches on such motions.
- 8.4 Emergency motions shall be put if in writing to the Joint General Secretaries for the attention of the Standing Orders Committee. No such motion shall be deemed an 'emergency' that is connected with circumstances which could have been dealt with by conference/committee allowed to forward motions for the agenda.
- 8.5 The Chair shall have the same speaking rights as any other delegate. In addition, the Chair may intervene during or at the conclusion of any discussion, to clarify the issues decided and/or to sum up the discussion.

- 8.6 A delegate who wishes to raise a point of order (which must be confined to the manner in which the meeting is being conducted) should say “*point of order*” and hold his/her hand aloft until called by the Chair. Subject to that exception, delegates should not interrupt another speaker.
- 8.7 The ruling of the Chair on any question relating to the conduct of the meeting shall be final unless a challenge to the Chair is supported by at least two thirds of the delegates present.
- 8.8 Save as provided herein, the business of the Conference shall be conducted in accordance with the normal rules of debate as laid down by Walter Citrine in the ABC of Chairmanship.
- 8.9 In the event of an equality of votes, the proposition before the conference shall not be carried.

9) Smoking/Alcohol/mobile phones

- 9.1 There shall be no smoking or consumption of alcohol allowed at the Conference.
- 9.2 All mobile phones should be switched off at all times during conference.