

The Jewish Leadership Council/The Board of Deputies of British Jews

Via email: [natasha@thejlc.org](mailto:natasha@thejlc.org)

25 November 2014

Dear Sirs

**Re: Conference entitled “International Law and the State of Israel: Legitimacy, Responsibility and Exceptionalism”**

Thank you for your letter dated 19 November 2014, received by email. I have given serious consideration to the points you raise and have also discussed them with members of the wider University.

The University of Southampton is legally obliged under Section 43 of the Education (N<sup>o</sup> 2) Act 1986, to take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that freedom of speech within the law is secured for members, students and employees of the University as well as for visiting speakers.

Our ordinances state that academic staff *“have freedom within the law to question and test received wisdom, and to put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions, with due regard for the need to respect others and promote the best interests of the University and academic learning, without placing themselves in jeopardy of losing their jobs or privileges.”*

The title of this conference raises an important question, but the conference itself takes no explicit perspective, and academic contributions from all interested parties are most welcome.

The event is designed to have a multi-cultural emphasis, and speakers and delegates have been invited from all perspectives. Their participation has been actively encouraged in relation to the presentation of individual papers and the running of dedicated panel sessions. The programme is now in the final stages of preparation, but if the Jewish Leadership Council or the Board of Deputies of British Jews would like to recommend suitable academic speakers the conference organisers are happy to receive their nominations.

**Professor Hazel Biggs, Head of Law School**

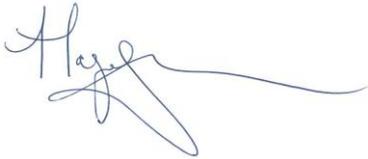
Faculty of Business and Law, University of Southampton, Highfield Campus, Southampton SO17 1BJ United Kingdom  
Tel: +44 (0)23 8059 3343 email: [H.Biggs@soton.ac.uk](mailto:H.Biggs@soton.ac.uk)

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The University of Southampton has no intention of causing distress or upset to any community and is committed to doing all it can within its statutes and ordinances to ensure that this does not happen.

I hope that this reassures you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Hazel', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

**Professor Hazel Biggs**  
Head of Law School

cc [G.Costigan@soton.ac.uk](mailto:G.Costigan@soton.ac.uk)  
[john.levy@foi-asg.org](mailto:john.levy@foi-asg.org)