

Media First1: Welcome to the National Union of Students conference 2020 election Hustings for national president. I'm your host, Keme Nzerem, and joining me today are some of your election candidates, Ayo Falana from the University of Wolverhampton Students' Union please say hi.

Ayo Falana: Hi.

Media First1: Larissa Kennedy from Wawrick Students Union, please say hi.

Larissa Kennedy: Hi.

Media First1: Nelly Kibirige from London South Bank University students' union. Please say hi.

Nelly Kibirige: Hi.

Media First1: Joshua Muirhead from the University of Sterling Students Union, please say hi.

Josh Muirhead: Hi.

Media First1: And Erica Ramos from the National Union of students. Please say hi.

Erica Ramos: Hello. Hello.

Media First1: Welcome to you all. Unfortunately, Calvin Jansz from the University of Brighton Students' Union and James Butler from Wawrick Students Union couldn't be with us today.

Media First1: Before we get to the questions that you students want to ask your NUS national presidential hopefuls. We want to hear from the candidates to open proceedings. Why do they, why does each one of them want to stand as a candidate. Larissa, why do you want to be NUS president

larissakennedy: Hi again, my name is Marissa I'm 21 and I'm a student activist working on social justice and climate justice.

larissakennedy: The student movement has been my home for the past five years. Since college, I've organized against sexual violence as the girl guide who represented half a million girls and young women at 16 years old.

larissakennedy: And co-developed and national strategy to tackle sexual harassment and schools. I was a 17 year old whose voice wasn't being heard. So I fought for national policy on Votes at 16 at the British Youth Council.

larissakennedy: Now that I'm halfway through my degree at Warick. I look back on the first half of my studies and I'm spurred on by what we've achieved.

larissakennedy: Together we've marched against student fees, and through the black students campaign we've fought racism on campus. I was the FemSoc president who kicked turfs to the curb and brought trans students from the margins to the centre of our movement.

larissakennedy: I was the first black woman sabbatical officer elected at my students' union ever, and the officer who created a legacy for the two black woman that followed me and the two who have just been elected to follow them.

larissakennedy: You've elected me once to serve on your national executive council and now I ask you to elect me again. But as your national president.

larissakennedy: I will equip, energize, and mobilize the grassroots of our movement to drive forward and vision of truly free accessible and lifelong education.

larissakennedy: Our national union was on the forefront of mobilizing against War and organizing against apartheid.

larissakennedy: In the age of the climate catastrophe an ongoing global pandemic, we need a national president has proven she can bring people together and organizations together to amplify the most marginalized and deliver the change that we need to see. This is what we can do together.

Media First1: Larissa, thank you very much indeed for that intro. Next I'd like to invite Nelly Kibirige to tell us why she thinks she should be the next NUS President, Nelly.

Nelly Kibirige: Thank you, Keme. Hello membership. My name is Nelly Kibirige, I'm the first two term President London South bank Students Union.

Nelly Kibirige: The first re-elected president and I'm also the first president to be elected in their first year. I also started a Students Union at my alternative provider college

Nelly Kibirige: Which once again made me the first ever president in that college. I have made changes for my students any and everywhere because education is something that I deeply care about. Moreover, having

Nelly Kibirige: An environment in education, which helps to support and advance you, so I initiated the petition on student loans which gladly, A couple weeks ago resulted into an all party parliamentary group at Westminster.

Nelly Kibirige: Many of you nationally came to that meeting, and it makes me so proud to see us working together and achieving common goals and common issues that affect students on a national level.

Nelly Kibirige: Although I am a students' union president, I have been working really hard to ensure that issues outside of my institution are also fixed

Nelly Kibirige: And I would like you. Last year I ran for NUS President and I came a very close second. So that shows that you trusted me.

Nelly Kibirige: You trusted me with the responsibility, but probably not enough. So what I did. I went away and did even more.

Nelly Kibirige: I've delivered incredible things for my students and your students, I've worked with offices around from Kingston to Brunel to, you know, you name it, and

Nelly Kibirige: So this is the workings of a national president. My incredible stakeholder engagement have managed to secure my students, some of the most

Nelly Kibirige: excellent placements around. I secured 500 placements for students, I have introduced new lanyards.

Nelly Kibirige: I've fixed your timetable, by introducing outlook integration, and it makes me proud to look around campus and see students using that function with or without wifi.

Nelly Kibirige: Among other things, so I would like you to trust an individual who is great with working with individuals, no matter what their political divide, no matter what institution they're from. No matter what you're colour is.

Nelly Kibirige: And elect me as a national president, this time with more votes than last year. Thank you.

Media First1: Nelly. Thank you very much indeed for that. Next, Joshua Muirhead. Why would you like to be the next NUS president?

Josh Muirhead: Oh. Hi there. My name is Josh Muirhead and I'm the current vice president communities at Sterling students' Union.

Josh Muirhead: During the last year, I've worked in several issues at my union and this includes getting a fair rent deal for students and seeing a mass improvement to student accommodation

Josh Muirhead: As well as an improvement and enhancement fun so students from all backgrounds can access housing, sorry best public speaker.

Josh Muirhead: I have worked on improving my University's carbon footprint and overall actions on sustainability.

Josh Muirhead: Pushing for the university to provide information sessions and support to our EU and international students and that's just to name a few things. I believe my time as vice president at Sterling has helped me provide has helped me

Josh Muirhead: to gain experience and knowledge that I can use as NUS president.

Josh Muirhead: I'm running to be the next NUS president, because I believe that no matter who you are, where you're from. We all deserve the best opportunity to do well in our studies.

Josh Muirhead: I personally have experienced some of the firsthand

Josh Muirhead: Hard barriers that do exist for students and despite all that is already done. We need to go further to ensure that everyone has the best chance for success with our studies.

Josh Muirhead: And with your support, I'd love to tell those barriers down and I want to work if elected to improve the strength of our nation's

Josh Muirhead: Whether that be Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and USI,

Josh Muirhead: The liberation groups for NUS as well as work on issues that affect us all, from housing to transport and general sustainability. So I want to just fight to improve our movement, to push it forward to the forefront of the education face of the of the UK. Thank you.

Media First1: Joshua. Thank you very much indeed for that. Next I'd like to invite Erica Ramos, Erica. What would you like to be the next NUS president?

Erica Ramos: Hello. It is a pleasure to have the opportunity today to say a bit more about who I am and what I will do

Erica Ramos: We all remember a defining moment. And for me, it came when I was 20 years old, I made one of the biggest decisions of my life to pursue my studies in the UK.

Erica Ramos: I arrived in London. I didn't know anybody. So I set up a society. My class didn't have access to the materials we needed to study. So I became a course rep, the waiting times to be seen by a mental health advisor was outrageous. So I stood to be an officer at my students union.

Erica Ramos: I was worried by the xenophobia after Brexit. So I got involved in the NUS international students campaign. And that's when I started to see NUS.

Erica Ramos: And I didn't think that NUS was as good as it should be. It wasn't good enough on championing students' unions.

Erica Ramos: It wasn't good enough in supporting elected officers and it sure was not good enough on representing students. So that's why I said to be vice president union development.

Erica Ramos: I was supported. I was supported working, recognition for apprentices, i'd represent international students and above all I put harnessing the power students unions at the top of NUS' agenda.

Erica Ramos: Now I'm standing to be president of NUS because the next two years will be a defining period for the UK, for young people, for students.

Erica Ramos: And for our education system. It'll be a defining period for our members, we may as well say it. It is a challenging time to be a student leader.

Erica Ramos: We relentless Brexit uncertainly student unions and students under attack from the media and no clear plans to averting the disaster of climate change.

Erica Ramos: But it doesn't have to be this way because throughout history students have changed the world. And NUS led the way

Erica Ramos: NUS can give power to shape the world, the power to make Britain a welcoming compassionate and kind place, where education is valued and we take definitive action to address climate change.

Erica Ramos: I've decided to stand for NUS president to make sure that we are at the heart of the debates, making sure that by 2022 we can be proud of the changes we've made. It's time to make NUS relevant, confident and effective again, it's time to unleash the power of the students.

Media First1: Eric Ramos. Thank you very much indeed for that. And lastly, of the fifth contenders that we've got to speak to us today Ayo Falana. Why would you like to be the next NUS president?

Ayo Falana: Thank you, Keme.

ex8467: I'm the current. My name is Ayo Falana, and I'm the current union affairs officer at the University of Wolverhampton SU. Previously I was the vice president of University of East London.

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ex8467: From my question previously experienced have developed a good understanding of students in a cosmopolitan society like London and a quiet environment like Wolverhampton.

ex8467: I have helped to take on campaigns that have been efficient and met student needs. Out of issues affecting students in the UK. I've always been tackling issues around fees, around BAME attainment gap, and welfare, which are dear to my heart.

ex8467: On fees, I helped to tackle

ex8467: and signed a letter against the turf in 2016 and I was part of the campaign that marched through London streets.

ex8467: On BAME, my team and I have launched a campaign on my university called Believe, Belong and Achieve campaign.

ex8467: This campaign focuses on celebrating BAME students success by highlighting the profiles of BAME students and stories and they were presented in various ways, which was well attended but staff from various University other than from our NUS education officer.

ex8467: This campaign aim is to look into greater insight of BAME student participation. These are linked to a sense of belonging, a diverse university. I also have initiated a parliamentary form of government in my university by making all the course reps

ex8467: to be part of the scrutiny committee, so it is wanting. I hope to achieve in NUS to make a more parliamentary type of government, whereby every university

ex8467: And every colleges have a representative on NUS, we should scrutinize NUS, other than what we currently are. So thank you.

Media First1: Thank you, Ayo, and thank you to all of the candidates. I'm sure the entire student electorate will agree that you've got an incredibly strong field there.

Media First1: And so now to the questions and we're going to invite Josh to respond first to the first question, which comes from the University of Birmingham.

Media First1: Everyone will get a chance to answer each question. But as I said, Josh is going to respond to this one first, I'll read it out.

Media First1: Beside the TOTUM card, students are for the most part, unaware of their local students union and the National Union of students.

Media First1: How will you connect with the students on the ground at universities and colleges across the UK.

Media First1: And make the National Union of students campaigns, ideals and actions more relevant to them,

Media First1: and their interests. So just to paraphrase that very, very briefly, how are you going to connect with students on the ground.

Media First1: And make NUS campaigns ideals and actions more relevant to students and students interests. That's from the University of Birmingham, Josh. Could you respond first please?

Josh Muirhead: So I think from my experience, what I can say is that I always tell the NUS was this thing that was always far away.

Josh Muirhead: And we, I think in my experience with them Sterling in Scotland, we always have much more interaction with NUS Scotland.

Josh Muirhead: Than what we would have normally with NUS UK, however, that has to change. Because for NUS

Josh Muirhead: Leadership for the President, the two Vice Presidents of higher and further education, they need to be much more on the ground and representative and going to the institution.

Josh Muirhead: Rather than just small fleeting visits, where it's just a more of a wave and smile, and 'I'll see you at conference'. So one of the first things I'd like to do

Josh Muirhead: Is actually getting on the ground and communicate with the Sabbatical officers at colleges and universities as well as alternative providers who

Josh Muirhead: are members of the end us to find out what their issues are, and then go and talk to the student bodies directly because it's very easy to do online or

Josh Muirhead: Or through other means. But really it's about finding a face to face what the real issues are and what we can do to change. And that's something I've always thought

Josh Muirhead: we should do. It's something I've done at sterling and something I would like to see the national movement. Will it be time consuming. Yes, it would be and it will be something that's difficult

Josh Muirhead: But at the same time going forward. I think it's the correct way because that is the one way we can be held accountable to our membership by being seen and being actually contactable. So hope that has answered the question.

Media First1: Thank you very much indeed. Josh. Erica, how are you going to connect with students.

Erica Ramos: So, as we all know, NUS is currently in a transitional year and going through reform. And one of the things it is committed to do as part of that reform.

Erica Ramos: Is to move from analog era to a more digital era. So the idea is to help students unions boost their engagement with their students first.

Erica Ramos: Talking to different students leaders from different students' unions across the country. It was evident that Students Union struggle with student engagement.

Erica Ramos: And this is due to the lack of resources and funding. So I will make sure to help students us first by building a case.

Erica Ramos: Of all the great things Students unions do on their campus and in their local communities. We need to make sure that the vice chancellors or politicians across all nations and the communities.

Erica Ramos: Are that are institutions are in can see that the impact of students unions have on individual members and wider society because together as students, Students unions and NUS, we can give students the power to make a difference locally and nationally

Media First1: Erica. Thank you very much indeed. Ayo, how are you going to connect with students around the country.

ex8467: Thank you Keme. The way I'm going to connect with students across the country is to like I said earlier on in my introduction,

ex8467: Is to have a more parliamentary NUS because for students like me, even though my university is affiliated with NUS, I feel disaffiliated with NUS, because

ex8467: I hardly get any support from NUS in my campaigns or whatever I want to do. Well, if you have a more parliamentary NUS and what I mean by parliamentary NUS is to have

ex8467: Two students at least from every university every colleges on council, NUS council, to hold the officers to account.

ex8467: By that way, every university will know what's happening within the NUS, other than just,

ex8467: having Very few people holding the officers to account or the executive committee, to be honest, I don't even know the structure of the of the political

ex8467: Of the democracy of NUS. But if we have a more parliamentary NUS. We can connect the entire student body and the whole country. And that's the way I believe, to go forward, which is properly written in my manifesto. Thank you.

Media First1: Ayo, thank you very much indeed, more reform, it would sound.

Media First1: Ayo is arguing for that. Larissa, how are you going to connect with students around the country.

larissakennedy: Apologies Mic wasn't quite working there. So thanks very much to the University of Birmingham Guild for the question, I think it's a really pertinent one

larissakennedy: Because if TOTUM has taught us anything, it's that we need to drastically rethink the way we engage with students. For too many NUS has become irrelevant and out of touch.

larissakennedy: But with two incredibly difficult years ahead, carving out what post Brexit Britain looks like for international students and those most impacted by the hostile environment.

larissakennedy: And with the precarity ahead for smaller specialist unions, we as we navigate a sector crisis. Students need a national union that reflects the issues that they're facing

larissakennedy: more than ever. we need an NUS that's fighting for student voices to be heard me uncertain times ahead.

larissakennedy: And NUS, that is known and visible, active and amplifying students campaigns in colleges and universities in every region and nation in the UK.

larissakennedy: And an NUS that supports student campaigners and officers with the skills or resources they need to drive real success. And in that success in seeing what's possible NUS becomes relevant to those it represents

larissakennedy: After seeing how the black students campaign was steering the national movement to decriminalize education.

larissakennedy: At a time when I was navigating these conversations on my campus and it was incredibly difficult. I saw space to learn to grow and to contribute to the national agenda.

larissakennedy: And no matter what the issue and no matter which union that coming from. I want every student to feel that way about our national union.

Media First1: Larissa, thank you very much indeed. And last but by no means least, Nelly, how you going to connect better with students.

Nelly Kibirige: Thank you Keme, and thank you Birmingham guild for the question. Um, well, the system's broken and it needs to be fixed.

Nelly Kibirige: But luckily I have already been doing this, so I'll continue doing what I'm doing, right across from

Nelly Kibirige: visiting campuses. So in one year alone have visited over 20 students unions and colleges and universities, connecting with their officers and finding out from the ground what issues that they need taking forward or what issues we can work on together.



Nelly Kibirige: I worked on the London working group where we were discussing how we can support our students within London with transport, you know, in a on a university meeting where we were discussing our newly

Nelly Kibirige: A new member of our university group college.

Nelly Kibirige: And one of the things apart. First part there was, why don't we work with TFL so that we can get some buses that, you know, people can hop on and off as long as you show your student ID.

Nelly Kibirige: And other universities and colleges locally, You can buy into and conversations with officers that was in the meeting at the London working group showed that this was something that they were all quite happy to take forward to their institutions. Outside of all of that,

Nelly Kibirige: I've also invited officers into my own union. So two weeks ago I hosted about 20 officers from different unions.

Nelly Kibirige: talking about once again mutual campaigns that we can work on together, how we can better support our students, you know, the issue of student finance has been really rife on my agenda from over a year ago.

Nelly Kibirige: And having experienced systematic barriers and trying to attain and education and

Nelly Kibirige: taken a very untraditional route for me to even get here, I completely understand the issues that students go through and when you talk to people about NUS and they think is just a TOTUM card.

Nelly Kibirige: I have been trying to get this message across. For instance, at my local co op I ran into two students, one goes to Kingston, and one goes to Solent and

Nelly Kibirige: One knew about the Union, and there were engaged, the other one knew absolutely nothing about it, I can assure you, that's not the case now - so I will absolutely continue to do what I'm doing.

Nelly Kibirige: Engaging with students on a real level and for Unions, unions can be toxic sometimes. And when my union was experiencing one of them was horrific and times of our lives.

Nelly Kibirige: I needed in NUS to be by my side. They weren't there. I needed our officers to reach out to me. To come and see us and say, Hey, do you need any support. They weren't there.

Nelly Kibirige: That will change when I'm national president because I will ensure that I support these unions not only because I face the same challenges that I know how difficult it is for an officer to effect change in their own union.

Nelly Kibirige: But also because the I know that they worth it. And the money that the affiliate is worth the support and services. Thank you.

Media First1: Nelly. Thank you very much indeed for that and, indeed, thanks to all of you a range of ideas, then some practical, some structural, some boots on the ground, some talking about further reform. So I want to come to Ayo.

Media First1: To answer the next question first, which flows on from the first one. We are of course where we are in the political cycle. And this question comes from SOAS

Media First1: SOAS Students' Union, so to Ayo. First, how should the National Union of students engage with the new Conservative government to best benefit its members. So just to repeat that from SOAS

Media First1: How should the National Union of students engage with the new Conservative government to best benefit its students. Ayo.

ex8467: Thank you Keme.

ex8467: I think if our if my knowledge could summarise, since 2016 we've been doing streets and

ex8467: Bringing up placards to the government to say why we shouldn't be charged these X amount of fees.

ex8467: the first thing I believe we should do is to look at what the Conservative government has in place for us. And the NUS and myself if elected.

ex8467: should actually do research on the statistics of what is beneficial for us because the government doesn't believe in those currently because

ex8467: They believe in statistics and recession, I believe we should walk with them in a diplomatic way and it will work with them in a diplomatic way.

ex8467: I believe we can we can work with them because what, one thing I want to work with the Conservative Government, which is in terms of fees in respect of fees because

ex8467: The fees being charged for students is too much, and I want to work with them on, like I said, the first thing I will do is to go into research.

ex8467: And tell, and let the government know why we shouldn't be charging these type of fees. I believe the government, Conservative government

ex8467: wants the best interest of student but they just need to take priority, and the priority is the only thing that is missing and

ex8467: And what my job is to let them know this priority, and if I work with any with all the students in the in the UK. After creating the parliamentary government

ex8467: I believe we can do a strike, to be honest, the entire student body, they can do a strike. That's my, that's my belief and if they are not

ex8467: if we walk with them, and it's not going the way I want it to go, the way that is beneficial to students, then strike is the best option for me.

Media First1: Ayo thank you very much indeed. To Larissa next and the Conservative government fees and a strike. Do you think that the

Conservative government is going to move on fees and is a strike the best way to get them to move?

larissakennedy: I think that's an excellent question. I want to thank SOAS for the original question and Keme, yourself for that follow up. Because I think

larissakennedy: If we're not going to be expansive in our vision for, kind of, that truly free accessible and lifelong education, then where do we have the space to truly drive that vision.

larissakennedy: I think we can learn from a lot of other organizations in this, of course there are steps we need to take another way to drive that forward in a in a tangible way. But yes, I think we should still be

larissakennedy: Pushing for movement on that, in the long term. And in terms of what that looks like in progress. I think we can learn from the likes of an organization like prices.

larissakennedy: And where they have their long term plan for homelessness, it lays out there and all term solutions beyond the government of the day and beyond current political favor, but

larissakennedy: It also means that their organization that does vital work in the short term is able to continue

larissakennedy: Regardless of government changes. So we have that vision, but we also have the steps that we need to take towards that vision in terms of whether a strike is a right perspective. I absolutely

larissakennedy: Support strike action. And I also think that there are other things that we can do to move towards not only free education, but all of the other things that we have on the agenda.

larissakennedy: And to develop that plan. I think in some ways I'm quite a unique candidate bring a lot of wealth of experience from other organizations, within so many I've worked alongside the government

larissakennedy: For example, kind of, with the women and equalities committee on sexual harassment and schools. I've sat on government advisory panels to end MGM child marriage preventable maternal death. I'm a trustee of the British Council, we work with the APPG for you.

larissakennedy: We have the use of that committee or knife crime, kind of, I think that my track record shows that I know when it's best to work government and how to do that in a

larissakennedy: Way that secures the results that we're looking for, but also when we need to be kind of banging on the door from the outside.

larissakennedy: And building the power and resistance needed to force the hand of government in our direction I'm ready to do that too. So it's those two sides of the coin, I think. I hope that answers the question.

Media First1: Larissa, thank you very much. Nelly. Next, how would the nus under your potential leadership engage with the Conservative government in the interest of the benefits of students.

Nelly Kibirige: Keme, the only way that NUS can engage with the Conservative government to deliver for students is by electing me as their national president

Nelly Kibirige: And here's my reasons why; currently NUS is factional fight draining to the student movement.

Nelly Kibirige: As a first time delegate I experienced that firsthand and I was literally intimidated and scared for my life.

Nelly Kibirige: You walk around universities and unions and you will hear the factional fights are absolutely draining and tiring to students.

Nelly Kibirige: So you need to elect a president who is excellent at stakeholder engagement, like I am. the only way I've managed to achieve things. The only way I know how to achieve my campaigns on wonderful students is via diplomacy.

Nelly Kibirige: I speak well with individuals. I make incredible friendships, right from meeting, for instance, the education secretary, who is

Nelly Kibirige: Conservative. Gavin Williamson, and I did not look at him as a conservative. I've met the individual twice, as far as I'm concerned, I will talk to him the same way about student issues like I would any other leader.

Nelly Kibirige: When I met Theresa May, for instance, I did not see a Conservative Prime Minister what I saw was a female powerful leader.

Nelly Kibirige: And also slightly fragile woman who needs to be supported by the people that she's leading, so

Nelly Kibirige: NUS needs a leader who will be able to do this for students because individuals are not bad because of their political affiliations.

Nelly Kibirige: You know, so to me, whether you're from this or that or whether there's a new political party that's going to be created tomorrow you will see me working excellently well with them the same way that I have done with others and I'll continue to do so. Thank you.

Media First1: Nelly. Thank you very much indeed. Josh to you next, obviously a very different political context north of the border, but this of course is a national posting. So your thoughts on how best the NUS under your leadership would work, engage with the Conservative government

Josh Muirhead: I think one thing to remember as you're not just working with the education minister, you'll be working with the

Josh Muirhead: education sector, the Minister for universities that have to work beyond just one singular ministry. So I think going forward, no matter what. it's having to engage with them.

Josh Muirhead: I happily admit to people, I'm a massive critic of the current Conservative Government, as well as the Premiership of Boris Johnson.

Josh Muirhead: However, that doesn't matter. Going forward, we need to engage as the government of the day.

Josh Muirhead: So by doing this as a beginning trust. It's about understanding that we will go into discussions and negotiations on opposite sides, but it's about finding

Josh Muirhead: That middle ground that will work for students. So it's also, I think the saddest part about is having to admit to the

Josh Muirhead: To the leadership that we could we could all as candidates promise the world. But realistically, we have to go and saying that we will be getting stepping stones to the future.

Josh Muirhead: It's a bit gradually getting there. And knowing that you're building on the work for future generations of students and future generations of officers. So by working. So I would work with the Conservative government

Josh Muirhead: Same way, would happily work with any governments have any heart so it's just that. So I think it's that thing of

Josh Muirhead: Understanding that they do have their own political view point as an ideological based thing.

Josh Muirhead: But just stepping forward. It's putting that leaving out the door to say

Josh Muirhead: Right. What can we do, what can we do, so there's a better safer future students and I think one example that's known as the current

Josh Muirhead: Crisis. We're seeing a Corona, it's about defending international students' rights, defending students rights for housing

Josh Muirhead: For the right to not be effective during the pandemic faces so spirit of having these realistic and hard conversations

Josh Muirhead: And just that message that you will, there will be a metal groans and that's probably where we have to inform rather than for our true massive beams. Yeah, that's how I would work by second service government

Media First1: Joshua. Thank you very much indeed. Now, Erica your experience as an international student, which of course Josh just

Media First1: Alluded to was something you spoke about just a minute ago with your perspective and a number of you obviously are international but we've your perspective, how do you think the NUS under your leadership should engage with the Conservative government

Erica Ramos: 100% and I agree with Nelly's point that she made about factions.

Erica Ramos: Because there's a lot of fighting and bickering and squabbling about policies and getting into deep into party politics only creates division and does not get us anywhere, because personally as an international student. And my first time as a delegate

Erica Ramos: In that room. It felt very overwhelming. So, and it scares off people like me who just is quite new into the politics and

Erica Ramos: Doesn't understand. So I totally agree with Nelly in there. So that means that we need to make sure that we lead a movement that is functioning efficient and fierce.

Erica Ramos: We need to make sure that we speak to whoever is empowering the government and not be afraid to stand up to and speak truth to power.

Erica Ramos: We need to be honest and recognize that there are many areas that we will disagree on but there are also areas where we can definitely work together and make positive change.

Erica Ramos: Because, you know, and there's a lot of areas. So we need to be honest to recognize that there are many areas, like, you know,

Erica Ramos: The battles aren't lost in the areas like Erasmus plus, student mental health, the climate crisis, the attainment gap, prevent, the NHS surcharge. It's up to organizations like NUS

Erica Ramos: To join the dots between students and governments, no matter what party they are and make sure that we can present a winning case.

Erica Ramos: For the things our members care about because students are the future and no government can ignore that and no government will ignore us for too long anymore. Now is the time for us to be fighting and fierce, clear and concise and speak truth to power.

Media First1: Erica. Thank you very much indeed. So I just want to get a sense of how activist

Media First1: You guys want to be, the five candidates that we have before us. And of course, students are no strangers to taking action of one kind or another, and something that Ayo mentioned

Media First1: In his response to this question is the prospect of strike. So I just want to quickly go around.

Media First1: And get a sense from all of you, starting with Ayo, you mentioned strikes are you calling for a strike on fees or are you suggesting that that is something that you could do.

Media First1: If the government doesn't talk to you and I'm going to ask everyone exactly the same question, is this something in the back pocket or is it something that you want to put front and centre.

ex8467: So that's something in the back pocket. After, after they know the necessary things that

ex8467: I would do, you know, I'll build my argument after research, after my statistics and, bring it up for to government, but if anything is not changing and I'm pushing and pushing and nothing is changing, I think I would go for strike, as a second option.

Media First1: Thank you. Larissa. Where do you stand on activism and strikes around fees.

larissakennedy: So I think to speak to direct action more generally, I think that it's important that we are upscaling our movement to both be doing the high level advocacy that engagements with government

larissakennedy: And the direct action it's necessary to drive the change that we often want to see.

larissakennedy: But that's why in my manifesto I've committed to a global rally for education. I think it's about bringing people together.

larissakennedy: And being on the streets and at the table and combining those methods to make sure that we achieve the end goal. So whether I support strikes, I absolutely support strike action if that's what

larissakennedy: Unions would like to do, but absolutely think that we need to be more as well rounded as possible and to tackle this issue.

Media First1: Thank you. Larissa. Nelly, Where do you stand

Nelly Kibirige: Thank you, Keme. I love a good strike. However, I don't believe that everything should be one via a strike.

Nelly Kibirige: I think he's leave your best strike for the best fights and and I do appreciate that student funding and fees is an incredibly important issue.

Nelly Kibirige: But I know that for instance in 2017, we nearly got somewhere with the petition that went round millions of students who assigned to say

Nelly Kibirige: we needed to decrease the fees to 3000 pounds and out following that when government agreed to discuss the petition.

Nelly Kibirige: I rented my students around. And so we can go and sit in on Parliament while they discuss this, because I believe, for instance, if you're in court.

Nelly Kibirige: And you're not there. You're not physically there a decision is going to be made. Either way, but if you're sitting and listening and even though you don't have a say in it.

Nelly Kibirige: people are conscious of what decisions they make, and for a very brief moment we need to go somewhere I shared this on my social media because

Nelly Kibirige: At one point, Theresa May was discussing yea fees, however, that died down very quickly because of the political climate.

Nelly Kibirige: But I think that as a realistic leader, if you're going to be national president, you have to be realistic about certain things.

Nelly Kibirige: Yes, we want this. Yes, we want that. However, I know very well that majority of our students do not have the time to engage in a strike.

Nelly Kibirige: Our students feel passionately about issues, however, send around a petition, they will sign it asked them, Do a call for action to ask them to come and engage physically. They don't have, we have 76% mature students on our campus.

Nelly Kibirige: And it doesn't

Media First1: Thank you thank thank thank you Nelly I'm conscious that other people want to respond to this, and we've got a lot of questions that we need to get through as well. Josh to you very briefly. Where do you stand on activism and strike. So I'm fees.

Josh Muirhead: I actually agree with Nelly, strikes definitely a last resort. I think there is so much we can do. student activism as well that is more more

Josh Muirhead: More or less, less striking based protests and more just there is other ways than direct action being the first point of call or

Josh Muirhead: As Ayo said, the second choice. I think we do have to look at how it would affect time, for instance, because of money and we're carrying issues

Josh Muirhead: It's for me strikes will have always have a point, possibly, I think straight to that last moment thing, that card you pull when you've just got nothing left.

Josh Muirhead: I think, as well as National. Sorry, just one more thing very briefly.

Josh Muirhead: As national president, we have to remember the funding is very different across the UK weather Wales and Scotland. So national straight. How would have to national impact affect everyone rather than just from the western US to government

Media First1: Sorry understood and of course the funding situation in various parts of the country does differ. Erica. Where do you stand

Erica Ramos: So I agree with Ayo, Nelly and Josh when it comes to the you know the the direct approach for me is a little bit intimidating. So as an international student for me and you've got a whole lot of international students in the country.

Erica Ramos: And striking and all that is can be seemed as a deemed as a little bit intimidating if because you're not familiar with the country and the politics and but if you are

Erica Ramos: Yeah, but my, I think that the best approach for the situation, especially under a conservative government is that we act pragmatically

Erica Ramos: And diplomatically, like how it was mentioned here before, we need to make sure that we are engaging in conversations with

Erica Ramos: local leaders, MPs and etc. To make sure that our point is come across professionally and efficiently.

Erica Ramos: And that they understand where we're coming from and then if it all goes down to, you know, they're not listening to us, then definitely, I agree with Larissa, that we should take definitive

Erica Ramos: Direct action and issue our demands. So that's it for me under my leadership and me it's all about balance we need to speak about the



issues and make a case and then speak truth to power. And then if it's not listened to then Larissa's point on direct action would be my choice.

Media First1: Thank you everyone from one question around direct action of one kind or another, to, to the next, which comes from the Regent Academy of Fine Arts and this is going to go to Nelly.

Media First1: First from the Regent Academy of Fine Arts. We've all seen the increase in climate change campaigning in the past year.

Media First1: Ranging from pupil's striking each month to large scale sit downs across towns and cities, led by extinction rebellion or XR as they are often called

Media First1: Given the vandalism anxiety and disruption caused by certain protesters. This is the words of the region Academy question.

Media First1: And the very real threat of climate change, should the National Union of students be distancing or embracing

Media First1: Extinction rebellion. So just that, to paraphrase that last bit, should the National Union of students be distancing or embracing extension rebellion and nearly if you could respond first please

Nelly Kibirige: Thank you very much, Keme and thank you Regents college. Um, I absolutely empathize with individuals whose and well being and anxiety was escalated, by extension, rebellion activity and even the vandalism, however, that should not put us off of

Nelly Kibirige: You know, I mean, we have a global climate emergency and considering is going to affect the youngest people the most of an Nus is representing young people and students across the country. I think they absolutely should be not distancing themselves.

Nelly Kibirige: From extinction rebellion, but actually embracing it and just looking at ways, you know, I love doing things diplomatically, just looking at ways that we can get our point across without coming across as aggressive towards especially

Nelly Kibirige: You know, individuals that for instance.

Nelly Kibirige: An old lady that was trying to get to a hospital and they had to walk a cancer patient, you know, just because they couldn't get through the strike. So there are ways, And one thing I would do, actually. With regards to this our task, Nus, if I'm elected as

Nelly Kibirige: President I would task. NUS with planting a tree for each individual member union that they have in the member unions and, of course, I'm happy to get back in and dig they're planting or for that.

Media First1: Nelly. Thank you very much indeed what aside from planting trees Joshua next can do you think the NUS can ride both horses. Is it possible to both distance from the more direct action. End of XR and embrace it at the same time.

Josh Muirhead: I think it's interesting. I'm very fortunate. My counterpart make special education Sterling is actually the co founder of extinction value and Sterling.

Josh Muirhead: I think there's so many ways that we could embrace extension rebellion. But in that way. That would harm students or the general public.

Josh Muirhead: I think it goes back to that concept of strikes and a direct action. We can do protests, we can do mass movements to encourage people to see that there is an issue. But I think when it comes to

Josh Muirhead: Stop students. And stop people being able to get to their jobs, but she can affect their livelihood, or Nelly's example was the hospital for cancer patient is definitely not something that we wait to push forward as an organization.

Josh Muirhead: I think

Josh Muirhead: I think that's the thing. There's a real issue for climate change. And it's not just something that will affect

Josh Muirhead: Communities far away for example, whether the Polynesian islands. It's something that is affecting the UK and with the rising sea levels and raising temperatures that will affect communities all across the bridge shows

Josh Muirhead: So I think we can easily embrace extension value, but it has to be in a realistic with something that like I keep saying doesn't harm our students. And I think it's

Josh Muirhead: goes back to the idea of lobbying governments lobbying multinational groups. So we do have a way that is beneficial for all and it's realistic stepping stone rather than blocking off waterways, which only alienates the population and effectively terms people against the activists.

Thank you.

Media First1: Joshua. Thank you very much indeed. Erica. I know. The question was posed as a binary, distance or embrace. We've heard two people say well by both horses. What do you say,

Erica Ramos: So, I mean, if we're going to talk about extinction rebellion.

Erica Ramos: Itself. I think there are lessons to be learned from the Climate Justice campaigning last year.

Erica Ramos: Extinction. So looking at the positive side extinction rebellion has managed to successfully put climate emergency front and centre of local and national media but

Erica Ramos: at what cost. So we need to harness that energy within this debate, but we also need to be careful to not alienate people to our cause.

Erica Ramos: The science is clear, but not everyone will be as quick to get it as we do. And as frustrating as it is, we need to be united and tackling the greatest issue of our generation. as greta thunberg.

Erica Ramos: Said, our house is literally on fire. So there's a short space of time to fix this and young people and students are leading the way.

Erica Ramos: It's important, we're awake. We're working with other climate groups, as we've mentioned it's been mentioned here.

Erica Ramos: But making sure that we're not campaigning on our own, and we should have a campaign of our own as well and which is clear and correct manner which is inclusive and accessible to all.

Media First1: Thank you. Erica. Ayo, the house is on fire, extinction rebellion have brought the fight to the front pages. How do you work with them.

ex8467: I Embrace it. On a personal level, and as the national union President. I embrace it 100%, you know, I'll go for it. Climate change is one of the things that's been affecting our generation And it's just a, it's just a shame.

ex8467: I know the vandalism and the anxiety that comes with it. You know I still address that, you know, I don't want vandalism, I don't want any of that. I just want just see what this would be, That's what I want. And they'll be on I embrace extension rebellion 100%

Media First1: Thank you. Ayo.

Media First1: Larissa, do you embrace 100%. Do you have caveats.

larissakennedy: Well first of all We want to thank the students at the region Academy for fine arts for the question.

larissakennedy: And an answer to that question me, I think, much like the campaigning work with most organizations, there are things that we can be learning on both sides of the coin.

larissakennedy: I, of course, think that we should be distancing ourselves from the ways that racism pervades the organization.

larissakennedy: And the failure of XR to recognize that many of the campaign activities that they engage it would pose a serious risk to Climate Justice activists of color.

larissakennedy: And lots of the other critiques. The XR have faced as Nelly alluded to, and having said that, I do think we should be embracing the ways that XR is driving attitudinal change at scale and building that movement for change. So

larissakennedy: All of that is, it is important to look at both sides of the coin. But I also think

larissakennedy: That our movement has much more space for synergy and for learning from the youth strikes for climate and I love mobilizing this movement on climate justice because a future shaped by young people and students is one I want to see.

larissakennedy: I used to take a lot of inspiration from student activists and officers who've been championing policy in their institutions to declare a climate emergency and setting measurable goals for how we address this.

larissakennedy: So kind of in short, I think we need a balanced well rounded approach and that's empowering students at the grassroots but also shaping the policy that means we can deliver holistically or climate justice.

Media First1: Thank you, Larissa, and you make a good point about the representation within XR

Media First1: And we've all seen the, the kind of the whitewashing of people of colour in particular, women of colour in in in some aspects of that movement which moves us on very

Media First1: Smoothly to the next question, which is going to go to Erica first from the union of Kingston students, about liberation.

Media First1: Liberation within the National Union of students has been uncertain in recent years and has also experienced disproportionate representation in students unions.

Media First1: What will you do to ensure all students, all students are truly represented and that no one feels isolated. So that's from the union of Kingston students - liberation. You first Erica.

Erica Ramos: Thank you, union of Kingston students for posing that very, very important question because I agree liberation has definitely been pushed to the side and been experienced a proportionate and experiencing disproportionate representation

Erica Ramos: This isn't a new problem, but it is time we fixed it, because as an international woman of color. I have seen it firsthand and I have first hand experience of prejudice and discrimination.

Erica Ramos: It's why I've always put Liberation Front and center in the work that I've done, because as a sab. I worked with liberation's

Erica Ramos: Liberation groups to tackle gender based violence I raised funds for the HIV charity alongside our LGBT plus student community and I led the work And Barnett for misogyny to be treated by the police as a hate crime.

Erica Ramos: So a huge strength of our movement is that it is accommodating to all of those backgrounds.

Erica Ramos: And allowing liberated groups opportunities for leadership. It is arguably our biggest strength when it comes to our policies because our policies are inclusive and forward thinking

Erica Ramos: I will help build a case for all the great things liberation student leaders are doing. In their students' unions.

Erica Ramos: And on their campuses and advocate to secure more funding for students unions to be able to have resources to support their liberation officers and groups.

Erica Ramos: And effectively deliver their campaigns and I will deliver definitely and work closely with the Vice President liberation, to make sure the Nus delivers liberation work effectively because

Erica Ramos: To be clear, if I am elected as NUS president, I will work tirelessly to make sure that NUS is able to bring back fully resource liberation campaigns, led by the full time officers in two years time.

Media First1: Erica. Thank you very much indeed.

Media First1: Ayo to you now liberation. How are you going to make sure that all students are fully and properly represented in the in nus.

ex8467: Thank you Keme, and thank you Kingston students union. I will, number one thing, I'll use an example to explain my point here. I wanted to be an international officer when I wanted to contest the NUS

ex8467: When I asked about the International Officer, I was told that it has been cancelled, or there is no more international officer. So I was so I was so shocked to, you know, to hear that and I was so sad about that.

ex8467: Because NUS wouldn't be nothing without outward facing campaigns and Liberation officer representing black LGBT Q trans disabled, women and international student

ex8467: And I wouldn't want to lead a union you know like that just having one liberation officer. I want an NUS with all the liberation officers, which is clearly written in my manifesto, I want an NUS liberation officer and I'm so keen on, I'm passionate about as well. So thank you.

Media First1: Ayo thank you very much indeed. Larissa

larissakennedy: I just want to thank the union of Kingston students for raising a question that's really close to my heart and

larissakennedy: Without the black students campaign and the women's campaign I can honestly say I would not be sitting here and running for president today.

larissakennedy: And the liberation campaigns have such a vital part of the work that NUS does. And I think it serves remembering in a time like this that none of celebration campaigns.

larissakennedy: Came easily. They were hard fought for by our respective communities and our allies and so in the spirit of that legacy. We can fight once again to restore all five liberation officers.

larissakennedy: And the full resourcing that they require so that all students feel fully represented and in terms of what we can do in the meantime.

larissakennedy: I think we need to address that representation and engagement properly over the next two years, and as your national president, I would work closely with student activists.

larissakennedy: Across the board to make sure that their priorities are tied in with the priorities of our national union. I'll make every resource I can available to these groups. So their demands and needs do not fall by the wayside.

larissakennedy: Liberation campaigns, where my route into activism as a student within this movement and the root for so many of us to learn more about the world around us, to articulate our experiences.

larissakennedy: And to realize our power to drive change. And believe me, my commitment to that is wholeheartedly strong and in this time we truly need a President that is going to put liberation at the heart of everything we do and at the core of our movement. And that's what I'm committed to do

Media First1: Thank you. Larissa. Nelly, will you put liberation at the core of your presidency.

Nelly Kibirige: Absolutely keme and thank you Kingston for submitting this question. Most recently, when we had the general meeting and for us to vote on whether to restore liberation's or not.

Nelly Kibirige: I consulted with a few unions and to see whether, how that can affect my vote, because not everybody had an opportunity to go

Nelly Kibirige: And it was very clear from everybody I spoke to that they wanted liberation's back and so do I. However, I have to make one thing clear that as national president

Nelly Kibirige: I will ensure that liberations are fully restored. However, we need to ensure that we don't break liberation's the way that we did. So as a black student

Nelly Kibirige: we haven't had a black students officer in my union for three years running and so

Nelly Kibirige: As a black BAME President, I was automatically sent for Black Liberation conference every year. However, I decided very quickly, not to return there because

Nelly Kibirige: A. didn't feel supported B. it was so hostile, once again, like I said, the faction in NUS is breaking up and breaking our students.

Nelly Kibirige: And intimidating them and stopping them from engaging. So that has to be a thing. However, what I've done in my own Union, for instance from introducing gender pronoun ID cards for staff and students.

Nelly Kibirige: Introducing the first ever racial equality training for staff and students.

Nelly Kibirige: And encouraging our union to send people to the Auschwitz concentration camp every year as part of the Holocaust educational trust.

Nelly Kibirige: And working fundraising money for Metro a charity that supports LGBTQ students under the age of 26

Nelly Kibirige: And apparently I raised the most money they've seen in my institution in a day. Then they had all together.

Nelly Kibirige: And right through to working with the Ugandan embassy on supporting international students, particularly at a time where with Brexit and the Erasmus program is at stake.

Nelly Kibirige: And and we're unsure, what's going to happen. So some of my conversations have been around introducing a proper Commonwealth exchange program.

Nelly Kibirige: Which has nothing to do with Brexit right and compositions actually been taken very seriously. And so we need to continue liberation's. I mean, you cannot do without liberation's but we have to ensure it's not a hostile environment. And when we have for instance a parents and carers support.

Nelly Kibirige: That the individual in charge of that does not exclude certain parents and carers because some more worthy than others.

Nelly Kibirige: Because of political factions. That's my stance.

Media First1: So an interesting overview there of the wider social and political context. Josh liberation and NUS, How will you ensure that Everybody's welcome.

Josh Muirhead: I think for for me, being a member of the LGBT community

Josh Muirhead: It's liberations in everything we do and for me it's not about talking on behalf of groups, it would be definitely going to those groups and asking what I could do to support them.

Josh Muirhead: It's, I was one of the people voted to continue the funding of the liberation campaigns.

Josh Muirhead: And I think it's, for me, it's a worry because of what we do see in society, and it's something that

Josh Muirhead: Nelly said. When you look at Brexit and how that's affected liberation groups. If you look at, obviously, our current crisis with Corona, and we are seeing a horrible rise in racism.

Josh Muirhead: And actually during this, been receiving emails of racist instances off my university campus, it's something really makes me angry, lack of support our students do

Josh Muirhead: Receive and that's across whether individuals are from our BAME LGBT q plus trans disabled, if they're a woman, if they're International. For me, it's about going to

Josh Muirhead: These communities, these students and their officers and saying, What can I do, please like basically use me to do what you need. And that's something I've done this year the Sabbatical officer.

Josh Muirhead: And it's something I've selected those national president that I would continue doing because as that thing. It's very easy for me

Josh Muirhead: To sit in my privilege and just say 'oh well it's not problem'. But there's a problem. If anything it's about using the privilege that I have. So it isn't a problem for people and to just basically. Yeah, it's about listening to those communities and going forward.

Media First1: Josh, thank you very much indeed. So we've got time for one quick fire question. And I'm going to get you all just to respond quickly and 20 or 30 seconds. On another matter of inclusion, really, really important one. A question from Derwen college students' union.

Media First1: And we're going to go to Larissa first but but briefly, if you will, because we've only got about four or five minutes left, guys.

Media First1: With more students' unions from specialist colleges joining at the NUS. How do you think you'll support them to be involved in NUS democracy and events.

Media First1: Given their wide range of learning difficulties and disabilities. So a question from Derwen College, how to extend liberation and inclusion, to take account of new colleges learning difficulties and disability to Larissa first and briefly, if you would.

larissakennedy: Thanks so much to students at Derwen college and I'm going to try and get through this answer quickly because it's such an important and expansive one.

larissakennedy: but I think this needs a really a multi pronged approach to

larissakennedy: Make this more accessible to students from specialist colleges, whether that's moving, moving towards more standardized terminology across the sector, addressing the disproportionately high cost that

larissakennedy: Disabled student adjustments and the unions that represent them are facing.

larissakennedy: continuing the reform to NUS' communications and ways of working to make sure that we continue the great work of the disabled students campaign on accessibility, digital and plain language uses

larissakennedy: Recognizing kind of, at the moment we're not where we need to be a course that kind of student union. So making sure that the routes

larissakennedy: For disabled students to access nus outside of their shoes and but also addressing those spaces that were championing inclusivity in where we're advocating, so we'll be in the office for students with Department of Education to be recognizing

larissakennedy: unions and then rarely ever invited to set around tables to making sure that that's more I'm on the table.

larissakennedy: And but also as a non-disabled student myself, making sure I'm actively listening to those voices and including them in conversations. Sorry, that was so fast. And we've been told, we only have a couple of minutes.

Media First1: Thank you. Larissa. Nelly, briefly, if you will, diversity inclusion in terms of learning difficulties and disability.

Nelly Kibirige: Absolutely and NUS needs to encourage more of these specialist colleges to join.

Nelly Kibirige: And in this case, with regards to Durham, thank you for such a beautiful question the hiring and doing incredibly well I mean they have fostered outstanding.

Nelly Kibirige: Right through to incredible support opportunities for their students to gain work within the community and employment opportunities, all the way down to support them, establishing

Nelly Kibirige: Relationships with sports clubs all throughout shrubbery just or their students can have a better. So in any case,



Nelly Kibirige: NUS could learn a lot from Darren college and however moving forward in order for Darren and institutions like Darren to continue doing the incredible work that they do for their students then nus needs to

Nelly Kibirige: Support them on a national to give them a national voice, all the way from, you know, lobbying government to make sure that they're more included to and I'm happy to answer this question by email after that because I know we haven't got long, thank you.

Media First1: Great, Josh.

Josh Muirhead: I think definitely nus as well as the entire university college sector needs to drastically improve on its accessibility.

Josh Muirhead: It's something that is becoming much more apparent when across the range of Russian space within the accessibility, whether it's physical disability, whether it's learning disability

Josh Muirhead: Policy. It's about basically making it as accessible for all students and something would be directly communicating with the call.

Josh Muirhead: Call just like that working with them to see what can we do to improve ourselves and it's something that she had managed to talk to Piers about, accessibility is kind of sealed off. So it's, it's, we're never we're not we're far from perfect.

Josh Muirhead: But it's about getting close to

Josh Muirhead: perfection as possible and listening to these students is the first thing. So yeah, thank you.

Media First1: Thank you Josh. Erica.

Erica Ramos: So as vice president union developments, this year I had the privilege and the honor to speak closely with small specialist unions who very much have vocally said and I agreed, that in the past they have been or ignored.

Erica Ramos: By full time officers and I have been speaking to them constantly and how can we make sure that the NUS.

Erica Ramos: Is fully engaging with them and developing them and helping with them with the resources and

Erica Ramos: Speak, and also we need to speak closely with a disabled campaign, the disabled students campaign to get that expertise and merge the charity and the Union development side together to make sure that we are supporting those

Erica Ramos: Small specialist unions in particular for accessibility. Thank you.

Media First1: Erica. Thank you. Ayo, you have the last word on the last question.

ex8467: Thank you very much Keme and Darren college student union, I'll work closely with with every unit to make sure those direct communication both from

ex8467: The NUS staff and the executive officers, for myself as a as a typical student. You know, you know, I would have loved more

ex8467: More support from officers, executive officers. Now, to be precise. And staff at the NUS in running campaigns and I will stretch this forward to newly members of the

ex8467: New colleges and on current college on the NUS on does all do direct communication with them on direct visits to this unit as a physical visits and communications, which is very key.

Media First1: Ayo, thank you. That is all time. That is all we've got time for today in this Hustings for the 2020 presidential election. Thank you very much indeed for watching. And of course, thank you to all our candidates. So thank you. Ayo

ex8467: Thank you Keme

Media First1: Thank you, Larissa.

larissakennedy: Thanks very much.

Media First1: And thank you, Nelly.

Nelly Kibirige: Thank you keme.

Media First1: And thank you, Joshua

Josh Muirhead: Thank you so much for having me. Thank you.

Media First1: And thank you, Erica.

Erica Ramos: Thank you. It's been a pleasure.

Media First1: There are, of course, two more candidates standing, James Butler and Calvin Jansz, who couldn't join us for this Hustings. Remember to vote.