

## Statement of Support for Chilean Student Movement



*From Bucharest, Romania, 24 April 2012*

The European Students' Union believes in the public responsibility of education, equal access to higher education for all members of society and right of students to participation in the governance of their institutions. We support the rights of students to speak, debate, and protest for their own beliefs, rights, and ambitions, and the existence of high quality public option education for all. These rights have been denied to students in Chile. The European Students' Union request the immediate reinstatement of these rights.

The demands of the student movement have been sensible and agreeable to the advancement of a democratic and peaceful society. These include sufficient public support and financing for public higher education institutions, elimination of the burden of tuition fees, equitable admission processes for all institutions, the creation of a government agency to implement laws against profiteering in higher education, the elimination of public support for private higher education institutions, quality assurance and accreditation processes to improve the quality of higher education, intercultural university environments, and the inclusion of students in the governance of higher education institution. These demands are agreeable to the values of European Students' Union and the Chilean Student Movement has our support in their struggle.

In the past months, Chilean students have protested, debated, and negotiated in order to achieve what rightfully should be theirs. Trough out their persistent effort they have faced threats, intimidation, and violence. We are shocked that the government is participating in these unjust actions that we are currently observing in Chile. We believe in the rights of students to shape their future without being pressured, threatened or targeted with violence. The European Students' Union, urge the Chilean government to protect their citizens and ensure these rights.

The methods used by the Chilean Police during the demonstrations of students, are unacceptable. There is clear evidence of students` rights being violated as the official report of The Humans Right's Institute of Chile states. The report was sent to the High Commissioner for Human Rights of the United Nations, in Chile in October 2010. The terrible events have led to a law proposal by the government, called "Law Hinzpeter", which aims to criminalize the student movement. This law would endanger all social movements in Chile. The government allowed the expulsion of students from higher education institutions as well as professors.

Thus European Students' Union, as representatives of the students from all over Europe give our strongest support and our solidarity to the Chilean Students.

**European Students Union (ESU)**

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