



Motion Regarding Conflict Minerals

Whereas, the SSMU is committed to ethical, socially responsible, and sustainable practices and leadership on campus;¹

Whereas, the International Rescue Committee has found more than 5.4 million civilians have been killed and countless more remain at risk as a consequence of attacks conducted by armed groups in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo;²

Whereas, natural resources- in the case of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) the minerals of tungsten, tantalum, tin and gold- are cited by the UN,³ as well as scholars,⁴ to be a factor in the prolonging of civil conflict;

Whereas, UN Environmental Programme defines conflict minerals as “natural resources whose systematic exploitation and trade in a context of conflict contribute to, benefit from, or result in the commission of serious violations of human rights, violations of international humanitarian law or violations amounting to crimes under international law;”⁵

Whereas, armed groups in the DRC generate an estimated \$144 million each year by trading in conflict minerals;⁶

Whereas, other university campuses including Ohio University, Duke University, St. Andrews University, University of Pennsylvania, Clark University, Emory University, University of Colorado-Boulder and Stanford University have passed resolutions both within student unions and at the administrative level varying from a symbolic acknowledgement of the link between conflict minerals and violence, to an official conflict-mineral free purchasing policy;

Whereas, recent legislation signed into law in the United States (Section 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform Act of 2010) requires that companies submit an annual report to the Securities and Exchange Commission disclosing whether their products contain gold, tin, tantalum, or tungsten from the Congo or nearby areas;

Whereas, Canadian Members of Parliament are currently drafting a bill outlining a due diligence process for mineral verification to be brought to Parliament within the year;

Whereas, the students of the McGill Chapter of STAND Canada remain concerned with the matter that consumer electronics contain tin, tungsten, tantalum and gold- conflict minerals mined in the DRC;

¹ <http://ssmu.mcgill.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/SSMU-Policy-Book.pdf>

² <http://www.rescue.org/special-reports/special-report-congo-y>

³ http://hdr.undp.org/en/reports/national/asiathepacific/timorleste/Timor-Leste_NHDR_2011_EN.pdf

⁴ <http://www2.lse.ac.uk/geographyandenvironment/whoswho/profiles/neumayer/pdf/resourcesandcivilwar.pdf>

⁵ http://www.iisd.org/pdf/2009/conflict_peacebuilding.pdf

⁶ <http://www.jww.org/cofncflictareas/congo/overview/conflict-minerals>



Resolved, that the Financial Ethics Research Committee be mandated to consider the role of conflict minerals in current and future investments under their Five Year Ethical Investment Plan and include considerations of conflict minerals in its reports.

Moved by:

Elie Lubendo, First Year Council Representative
Colleen Morawetz, Arts Representative to SSMU
Robin Reid-Fraser, Vice-President (External Affairs)
Zachary Rosentzweig, Clubs and Services Representative
Sarah Southey, Residences Representative
Max Zidel, Senate Caucus Representative

FOR APPROVAL