

## PST is contributing to prejudice

The Norwegian Students' Union, NSU reacts strongly to PST's wish to control students and researchers from so-called worrying countries. Leader of NSU, Ingvild Reymert says head of PST, Jørn Holme stigmatizes international students, and is contributing to prejudice when he wants stronger control of students and researchers from other countries. The PST's yearly threat report that was released on Monday states a concern that someone could get access to knowledge and technology in Norway and use this to develop weapons of mass destruction abroad. Holme denies that PST is stigmatizing students, and claims their concern is with a very small number of students from a few worrying countries. Read more in Dagsavisen 11 February 2009 (in Norwegian) <http://www.dagsavisen.no/innenriks/article397593.ece>

## Statement from ISU

The Politiets sikkerhetstjeneste (PST), the Norwegian Police Security Force, is considering, in its yearly report, that they need to increase their monitoring activities for following up on international students from rogue countries that would like to come to (or already are in) Norway, learning about technologies that could develop weapons of mass-destruction - for the benefit of their rogue countries! They have not defined what a 'rogue state' is or what academic studies related to weaponry could be perceived as a threat. They have not started with any monitoring yet.

Such broad and vague definitions could be used in the future as reasons for breaking privacy laws, for refusal of visa, for refusal of residence permit extension and would affect severely the availability of both academic and job markets for students in Norway. Moreover, it is a discriminatory act against students coming from Asia, Middle East, Africa and perhaps later on Eastern Europe and South America. This would cause further tension, mistrust and alienation between students, new immigrants, past immigrants and the rest of the Norwegian society.

ISU requests from relevant media and concerned parties including our partner organizations: StL, NSU and SAIH, for the following points:

- (a) all students should have the same privacy rights, whether international or not;
- (b) as long as there are no suspects, or proof of false intentions, then there should be no reason to monitor anybody in Norway and/or deny residence permit and/or visa;
- (c) the police in Norway should also safe guard human rights, academic freedom and discourage any acts that might lead to discrimination, alienation and tension.