



INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' UNION OF NORWAY

REPORT 081231

International Students' Union
of Norway (ISU)

Bi-Monthly Report

29 December 2008

Prepared by

Farshad Tami, National President

Prepared for

Member Branches

and

Samarbeid Partners

- Studentenes Landsforbund (StL)
- Norsk Studentunion (NSU)
- Studentenes og Akademikernes Internasjonale Hjelpfond (SAIH)

ISU General Info and Objective

The International Students' Union of Norway (ISU) is an independent, democratic, non-profit, non-partisan organization run for and by international students. ISU is committed to the social, academic and political interests of all international students studying in Norway. ISU's national administration is located in Oslo, with a National President, two Vice Presidents and an Organizational Secretary. ISU member organizations are located at 12 institutions of higher education around Norway. ISU's basic funding is from the Norwegian Government with an annual amount of NOK 270.000,00 (July 2008 – June 2009). ISU is in partnership with NSU, StL and SAIH.

Overview of Report Period

ISU had its first National Assembly during the academic year 2008 – 2009 at Universitetet for miljø- og biovitenskap (UMB) in Ås, where ISU branch members met along with partners and discussed many issues important for all. Also ISU participated in partner general assemblies as well as in conferences held by [Ministry of Children and Equality](#) and [Norges barne- og ungdomsorganisasjoner \(LNU\)](#). These past two months also marked the transitional period between the National Board 2007 – 2008 and the new one for 2008 – 2009. ISU also signed a memorandum of understanding with StL, an agreement ISU have been long waiting for.

Previous and Current Activities

During the month of October, ISU's 1st Vice President, Prashant Søegaard, attended a [Seminar on Mobility 2008](#) prepared by the [Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Higher Education \(SIU\)](#). The event focused on student mobility in a strategic perspective where Prashant was one of the panel discussion members and presented ISU's view on student mobility. From 17th to 19th of October, ISU held its National Assembly at UMB

(Ås.) The assembly left a marking effect on the ISU members attending as well as inspired them to do work more on not just student social needs but welfare: effects that have been rippling since then to ISU Local Branches in Bergen, Oslo and Stavanger. During National Assembly, we discussed better cooperation between students, in particular international students, with student welfare organizations (Studentsamskipnaden) in Norway. ISU Local Branches also shared experiences, challenges and success stories with each other and with our partners NSU, StL and SAIH. On the last day, the meeting ended with the reelection of ISU National President, Farshad Tami and the election of the new 1st and 2nd Vice Presidents, Maria Korotkova and Isaac Mensah, respectively. For more info about our National Assembly, please refer to the minutes of meeting found here: http://isu-norway.no/NAII2008/MIN_081019_ISU_NAII08.pdf. Moreover, end of October marked the yearly SAIH General Assembly where ISU was a voting member for the first time and represented by ISU National President. The General Assembly discussed strategies, constitution as well as held elections for the upcoming SAIH leadership in January.

During November, National President attended the [Nordiskt Ordförande Möte \(NOM\)](#) meeting in Iceland. The meeting is a regional network of student organizations from all the Nordic and Baltic countries, in addition to Greenland and Faroe Islands. ISU's objective of attending such a meeting (for the second time) was to try to advocate and copy the experience of ISU in neighboring countries. Iceland, Sweden, Finland and Estonia showed the most interest and agreed to follow up and consider the possibilities. ISU is proud to present these valuable results; expansion of our cooperation in the international arena will bring our organization on a new, higher level. The travel and accommodation was mostly covered by the NOM conference.

ISU also attended a one day of a two day conference by the [Ministry of Children and Equality](#) where they discussed the Ministry's upcoming policy plans for children and youth in general and in various organizations, including student organizations. The conference also discussed trends of thought among children and youth concerning inclusion of non-Norwegian citizens, equalities and discriminations of all sorts.

ISU National President traveled to University of Agder in Kristiansand and met with the university's parliament leader Helge Hovland, Erasmus Student Network's (ESN) leader Magne Dolva and interested students. The meeting was ISU's second attempt to establish a local branch there and steps for upcoming plans during January 2009 have been made. Hopefully by the end of the latter month, an elected board will represent international students at their institute. It was also agreed that if they provide evidence that they have the means to sustain the board for another year and that they truly represent international students then the ISU National Assembly in Oslo (April 2009) has to decide if they will vote them in a local branch or not. On the same day, ISU Organizational Secretary, Solveig Aamodt, took part in a meeting with SAIH, NSU and StL where a draft for a solidarity letter was considered. According to ISU Resolution on Solidarity, two thirds of ISU Local Branch Presidents approved ISU's upcoming involvement and soon a letter will be submitted to the Norwegian authorities requesting action towards the Colombia government in order to halt all intolerable actions against students there. ISU also signed a memorandum of understanding with StL, an agreement ISU have been long waiting for since the beginning of the partnership (Please find the document attached).

Finally, during the end of November, ISU 1st and 2nd Vice Presidents came to Oslo and took part along with National President in both NSU and StL assemblies (Landsstyre/Landsstyremøte). These events are opportunities to not only introduce the new ISU board to the partners but also for the new board to learn about the partners: how they conduct their meetings, different approaches to student politics, networking and sharing the

nice time. ISU National Board took the opportunity to meet with each other and discuss upcoming plans and activities.

Table.1 Summary of official meetings that ISU have been invited to and attended:

Meeting	Date	Place
SIU Seminar on Mobility	15 October	Oslo
LNU Conference for Youth Leaders	23 October	Oslo
SAIH General Assembly	25-26 October	Oslo
Nordic Student Organizations Meeting	30 October – 2 November	Reykjavik, Iceland
Conference by the Ministry of Children and Equality	11 November	Asker
Solidarity for Colombia: Meeting with partners	20 November	Oslo
ISU Expansion (Agder)	20 November	Kristiansand
StL and NSU Landsstyre	28 – 30 November	Oslo

Upcoming Activities and Meetings

During upcoming months, ISU National Board hopes to (a) develop an action plan for the upcoming year, (b) support the appointed committees (Handbook, Cooperation and Recruitment), (c) support ISU Local Branches at University of Oslo, University of Bergen, NHH and University of Stavanger develop their campaigns for better welfare conditions for international students at their institutions and studentsamskipnaden, (d) apply for a Fridfund (source of funding) from LNU, (e) coordinate with ISU BI preparing for ISU National Assembly in April, (f) follow up with Ministry of Education and Research concerning finding a solution that provides better funding for Quota Scheme Students when they arrive to Norway, (g) find alternative and perhaps a bit radical solution concerning the Quota Scheme Students in case the government did not come up with a solid answer by end of February 2009 and (h) finally, ensure that local branches will provide their institutes and parliaments with info regarding Language Policy and Inclusion Funds similar to what UMB (Ås) has.

The following activities/events are to take place:

- ISU will insure that the organization will be taken into consideration when NSU and StL consider the merging process of the two organizations. In addition to the cooperation agreement, ISU wishes that both partners will strive to continue providing (a) financial support in case the government fails in continuing its support (that can be negotiated) and (b) space at their future office,
- ISU will continue its traveling plans to Kristiansand in order to ensure a successful assembly for a international student organization (tentatively on 27th of January),
- ISU will hold its second consecutive yearly Presidents' Meeting in Bergen, hosted by ISU NHH and will take place tentatively from 24th to 25th of January,
- ISU will attend partners' meetings, such as the StL Networking conference (6-8 February 2009) and Landsstyremøte (27-28 February 2009) in Oslo, NSU Landsstyre in Bergen (7-8 February 2009) as well as SAIH and LNU meetings in February,
- ISU will also take part in [Spire](#) weekend cabin trip taking place during January or February. ISU have been considering partnership with the latter student organization.

Summery

After each ISU National Assembly that takes place in October, ISU, locally and nationally, tends to peak its activities on both the social and welfare level. The need to improve conditions of international students, at both studentsamskipnaden in Bergen and Stavanger, is a good example of this. We hope that the cooperation that took place with partners after the National Assembly in October and the upcoming Presidents' Meeting will bear fruits for better internationalization of education in Norway.

Acknowledgments

ISU National would like to thank the former ISU Vice Presidents, Prashant Sjøegaard for his services for ISU during 2007 and 2008. We worked closely for one year and got to learn a lot from each other. He has a critical and unbiased point of view that was much required during the one year we shared ISU tasks. Prashant managed funding applications for our organization, helped with financial issues, as well as drafted letters to governmental and student organizations including the [Ministry of Education and Research in Norway](#). His work was one of the major factors in making ISU a stronger organization. Also, we extend our appreciation to both 2nd Vice Presidents, Elena Egortseva and Eton Williams for their cooperation, support and assistance.

ISU National would like to thank the former ISU NHH president, John Knudsen for his services to ISU locally and nationally and welcomes the new president Emma Fay Micklem. ISU would also like to thank both NSU and StL for their support that made the visits of both Maria and Isaac to Oslo possible.

Attachment:

Memorandum of Understand between StL and ISU



Memorandum of Understanding

November 2008

This Agreement entered into by and between
Studentenes Landsforbund
Hereinafter referred to as StL,
and
The International Students' Union of Norway
Hereinafter referred to as ISU

ARTICLE I

StL and ISU hereby reconfirm their cooperation
based on mutual respect and partnership.

ARTICLE II

TERM. This Memorandum of Understanding shall
begin on 01 November 2008.

ARTICLE III

DUTIES AND RESTRICTIONS. StL and ISU shall
have equal treatment, to the best of their abilities, in
representing each other as observers, including the
covering of all expenses for one observer, at
national assemblies, national board meetings and or
other relevant meetings.

ARTICLE IV

CAPITAL. The capital of the partnership shall be
contributed by the partners as follows: As a
financial assistance towards specific projects related
to StL member organizations, StL and ISU will
negotiate, to the best of their abilities, in allocating
proper funding from StL for specific projects
conducted by ISU.

Memorandum

November 2008

Denne avtalen ble inngått av og mellom Studentenes
Landsforbund, heretter referert til som StL
og
The International Students' Union i Norge, heretter
referert til som ISU

ARTIKKEL I

StL og ISU bekrefter herved at deres samarbeid er
basert på gjensidig respekt og partnerskap.

ARTIKKEL II

PERIODE. Dette memorandum trer i kraft 1.
november 2008.

ARTIKKEL III

OPPGAVER OG RESTRIKSJONER. StL og ISU
skal ha lik behandling, etter beste evne, ved
representasjon av hverandre som observatører på
landsmøter, ledelsesmøter og/eller andre relevante
møter.

ARTIKKEL IV

KAPITAL. Partene skal bidra til partnerskapets
kapital på følgende måte:
Som økonomisk assistanse til spesifikke prosjekter
relatert til StLs medlemsorganisasjoner, skal StL og
ISU etter beste evne forhandle om passende
finansiering fra StL til spesifikke prosjekter i regi av
ISU.

ARTICLE V

VOLUNTARY TERMINATION. The partnership may be dissolved at any time by agreement of the partners, in which event the partners shall proceed with reasonable promptness.

ARTICLE VI

ARBITRATION. Any controversy or claim arising out of or relating to this Agreement, or the breach hereof, shall be settled by mutual arbitration and understanding.

ARTIKKEL V

FRIVILLIG OPPSIGELSE. Partnerskapet kan opphøre når som helst etter gjensidig avtale mellom partene.

ARTIKKEL VI

MEGLING. Enhver konflikt eller krav som kommer av, eller er relatert til denne memorandum, eller brudd på denne, skal løses gjennom gjensidig meglings og forståelse.

On behalf of StL
På vegne av StL

Øistein Ø. Svelle
Leder - StL 2008/2009

Place, Date: Oslo 17 November 2008
Sted, Dato:

On behalf of ISU
På vegne av ISU

Farshad Tami
National President 2008/2009

Place, Date: Oslo 19 November 2008
Sted, Dato: