

# **Open Letter in Support of Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression at Jawaharlal Nehru University**

February 18, 2016

*To: Jawaharlal University Students Union (JNUSU), and Jawaharlal University Teachers Association (JNUTA)*

We GSOC-UAW Local 2110 (The Union of Graduate Employees of New York University), which represents over 2,000 students, express our solidarity with you - our colleagues - the students, staff and faculty of Jawaharlal Nehru University who are resisting the attempt by the government and right-wing activist groups to stifle critical thinking and freedom of expression in your campus and in universities across India. We have been following your resolute struggle closely, and we strongly condemn the breach of the university as a legally designated autonomous space protected from direct state intervention. We also extend our heartfelt support to Kanhaiya Kumar, President of the Jawaharlal Nehru University Students Union who is wrongfully in police custody and other students who have been falsely charged as ‘anti-national’ through an archaic law against sedition that is rooted in colonial era politics of repression.

We believe, with you, that a university must be a space where a diversity of political and intellectual positions may range, and where they can be debated and discussed peacefully, without fear of repression and persecution. We are inspired by the teacher-student solidarity on display on your campus and the grace and dignity with which you are resisting repression and violence. We admire your courage, strength and unity in the face of adversity. We recognize that your struggle has far-reaching consequences for democracy, education and the freedom to dissent in an increasingly polarized world. Your joint struggle is reverberating across the world and we stand in solidarity with you throughout the coming months of teach-ins and indefinite strike.

*In Solidarity,*

*GSOC-UAW-Local 2110*

Statement ratified by the GSOC-UAW-Local 2110 Political Solidarity Committee



**GSOC-UAW LOCAL 2110**  
**MAKING A BETTER NYU SINCE 1998**  
The Union for Graduate Employees at New York University