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UNIVERSITY

Press Release

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London Metropolitan University hosts major political summit

London Metropolitan University hosted a major political summit earlier this month which featured a panel of political leaders and top Government officials from around the world.

The event, entitled “Nationalistic Tendencies: What Future for Global Citizenship?” shed light on whether patriotism equals nationalism and focused on contemporary issues such as Scottish and Catalan independence, the coup in Zimbabwe and Brexit. The summit also dissected whether existing nationalist governments are truly democratic.

Led with an inspiring speech by keynote speaker, Ambassador Dr Josephine Ojiambo, the Deputy Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, the day-long event allowed students at London Metropolitan University and other interested parties to ask questions and listen to global leaders.

Dr Ojiambo stated that a nation state is a “group of people who share historical figures, ethnicity, race and culture. A Democratic system cannot exist in a clearly defined nation state.”

Organised by Ring 4 Change, an international pro-democratic, non-partisan, non-governmental and non-profit organisation which advances and promotes positive change in governance, the summit delved into nationalism, populism and patriotism in evolving democracies.

The summit doubled up to launch a new book. Written by Mr Godson Azu, an alumnus of the Islington-based University, ‘Nigerian Democracy and Political Personalities: The one hundred outstanding politicians that shaped our political history,’ features a brief historical collection of key narratives of Nigerian political personalities which have helped to shape the country’s political history and landscape.

Mr Godson Azu, the Director of Cater and Merger, a communications company, said: “This book talks about many respectful Nigerian founding fathers. Many serious issues are discussed in this book and it is a great book for those interested in the politics and history of Nigeria.”

Speaking about the book, Dr Josephine Ojiambo said: “Nigeria is the lion of Africa - you need to read this.”

Attended by researchers and students, the summit produced an interesting range of questions and statements. Students were specifically interested in hearing about the panel’s views on the current coup in Zimbabwe.

London Met’s Vice-Chancellor, Professor John Raftery, who opened the summit, explained the importance of students discussing politics. “My job as Vice-Chancellor is to create conditions where students can listen and disagree without being disagreeable, and how to balance arguments to make good decisions,” he said.

“Our world is what we make of it, or what we let it become,” he said.

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Notes to editors

- The event was hosted as part of the University’s first ever Fast Forward Festival, a month long festival of events hosted by London Met with the aim of supporting students into high skill, high impact, and highly paid graduate jobs.

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About London Metropolitan University

London Metropolitan University has been providing education to people from all backgrounds since 1848, with the creation of the Metropolitan Evening Classes for Working Men. Six schools teach cutting-edge, relevant courses across the arts, sciences, business, law and humanities. Accelerator – London Met’s specialist business incubator – helps graduates get their enterprises up and running and was named among the Top Five ‘Most Active’ accelerators in Europe in 2015, highlighting its contribution to London’s booming start-up industry.

London Met is home to world-leading academics who regularly give expert comment to the media. The University scored well in the 2014 Research Excellence Framework, being ranked 4th in the country for Area Studies and performing strongly in Education and Social Studies.

The University is strongly focused on employability. In 2017, London Met recorded its highest ever graduate employment score, with 95% of all 2015/16 graduates in work or further study six months after graduation. It was also ranked above all five Russell Group universities in London for teaching quality in 2016.

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