

NEWS

UWI responds to Kambon's claim

SASHA HARRINANAN

THE University of the West Indies, St Augustine has denied claims by Shabaka Kambon that he was ejected from a consultation to decide on a new name for Milner Hall. Kambon, Director of the Cross Rhodes Freedom Project (CRFP), issued

a statement on December 1 claiming he was declared persona non grata by Campus Principal Professor Brian Copeland.

Kambon also accused Copeland of preventing him from speaking during the November 30 consultation of UWI Alumni. Not so, says The UWI. In its De-

cember 15 response to Kambon's claims, the university said, "while students expressed strong and diverse views on the matter, as is fully encouraged in our academic environment, Mr Kambon's tone at the first consultation was belligerent and disruptive."

UWI Vice-Chancel-

lor Professor Sir Hilary Beckles allowed Kambon, who was present at that first session, allowed Kambon "to have his say" at the November 30 consultation too. The university says Copeland spoke to Kambon as he was about to comment during the question and answer session on November

30, asking the CRFP director if, after receipt of a formal Cease and Desist legal demand from the university, he had removed certain social media posts.

The UWI says its legal letter demanded that Kambon and his colleagues, "immediately cease and desist your unlawful posting

of videos, photographs and comments on your Facebook page in relation to the renaming of The UWI's Milner Hall of Residence and desist from any other infringement of our rights in the future.

Furthermore, we request the immediate removal of video links, photographs and comments currently on your Facebook page in relation to our employees and students, which defame and misrepresent their views."

The UWI said Kambon told Copeland he had not removed the posts and advised the Campus Principal to consult his (Kambon) legal advisors.

The university said shortly after Copeland "disallowed" Kambon from making any further comments, the CRFP director began to protest and was eventually asked by security to leave the meeting. "Mr Kambon was not evicted from The UWI's compound and indeed, was seen in the vicinity of the venue when the meeting closed. To date



Shabaka Kambon

the offending social media posts remain published," The UWI stated.

After learning of Kambon's accusations subsequent to this, Beckles issued a warning about appropriate behaviour on campus. "UWI's open culture should not be abused; its collegial hospitality should be respected and it has a right to protect discursive standards," Beckles said.

The university explained that "the discursive standards to which (Beckles) refers speak to, inter alia, the use of fully informed logic in building a statement or argument. This is what one expects of a University and of civilised society charged with developing the minds of the future."

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