

We, the undersigned, share the view that Pope Ratzinger should not be given the honour of a state visit to this country. We believe that the Pope, as a citizen of Europe and the leader of a religion with many adherents in the UK, is of course free to enter and tour our country. However, as well as a religious leader, the Pope is a head of state and the state and organisation of which he is head has been responsible for:

- opposing the distribution of condoms and so increasing large families in poor countries and the spread of AIDS
- promoting segregated education
- denying abortion to even the most vulnerable women
- opposing equal rights for lesbians, gay, bisexual and transgender people
- failing to address the many cases of abuse of children within its own organisation.

The state of which the Pope is head has also resisted signing many major human rights treaties and has formed its own treaties ('concordats') with many states which negatively affect the human rights of citizens of those states. In any case, we reject the masquerading of the Holy See as a state and the Pope as a head of state as merely a convenient fiction to amplify the international influence of the Vatican.

Stephen Fry, author and broadcaster

Professor Richard Dawkins

Professor Susan Blackmore

Sir Terry Pratchett, author

Philip Pullman, author

Ed Byrne, comedian

Baroness Blackstone

Ken Follett, author

Professor A C Grayling

Stewart Lee, comedian

Baroness Massey

Claire Rayner OBE, journalist

Adele Anderson, singer and actress

John Austin MP

Lord Avebury

Sian Berry, politician

Professor Simon Blackburn

Sir David Blatherwick KCMG, OBE, writer

Sir Tom Blundell, biochemist

Dr Helena Cronin, philosopher

Dylan Evans, philosopher

Hermione Eyre, journalist

Lord Foulkes

Professor Chris French

Natalie Haynes, comedian

Johann Hari, journalist

Jon Holmes, comedian

Lord Hughes

Robin Ince, comedian

Dr Michael Irwin, former Medical Director, United Nations

Professor Steve Jones

Sir Harold Kroto, chemist
Professor John Lee
Zoe Margolis, writer
Jonathan Meades, author
Sir Jonathan Miller, director and author
Diane Munday, social activist
Maryam Namazie, human rights campaigner
David Nobbs, author
Professor Richard Norman
Lord O'Neill
Simon Price, music journalist
Paul Rose, politician
Martin Rowson, cartoonist
Michael Rubenstein, legal publisher
Joan Smith, author
Dr Harry Stopes-Roe, former lecturer
Professor Raymond Tallis
Lord Taverne
Peter Tatchell, human rights campaigner
Baroness Turner
Professor Lord Wedderburn of Charlton QC FBA
Ann Marie Waters, co-spokesperson on the One Law for All Campaign
Professor Wolpert
Jane Wynne Willson, social activist

Unless otherwise stated, all of the above have signed in an individual capacity.